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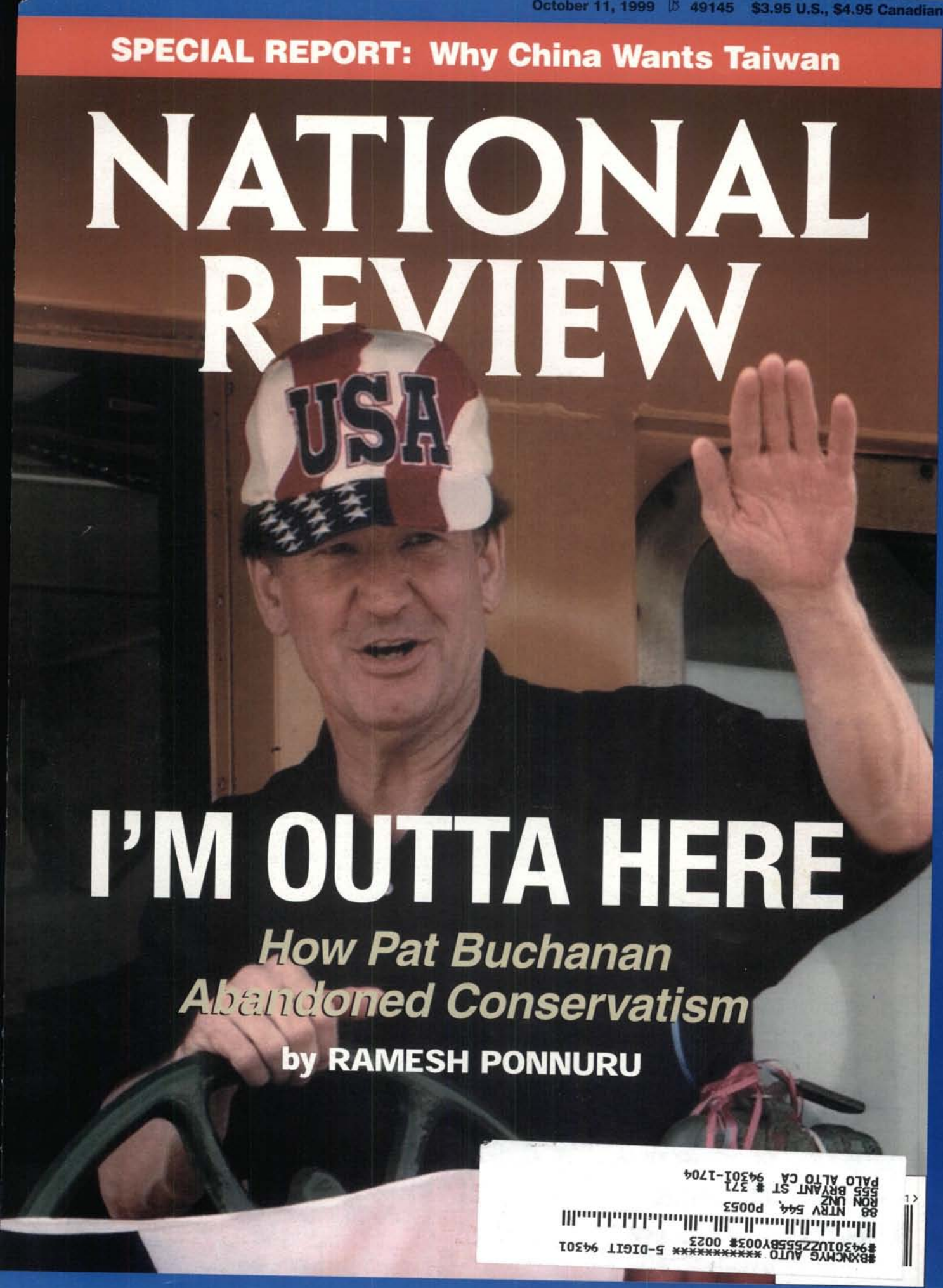

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by RAMESH PONNURU

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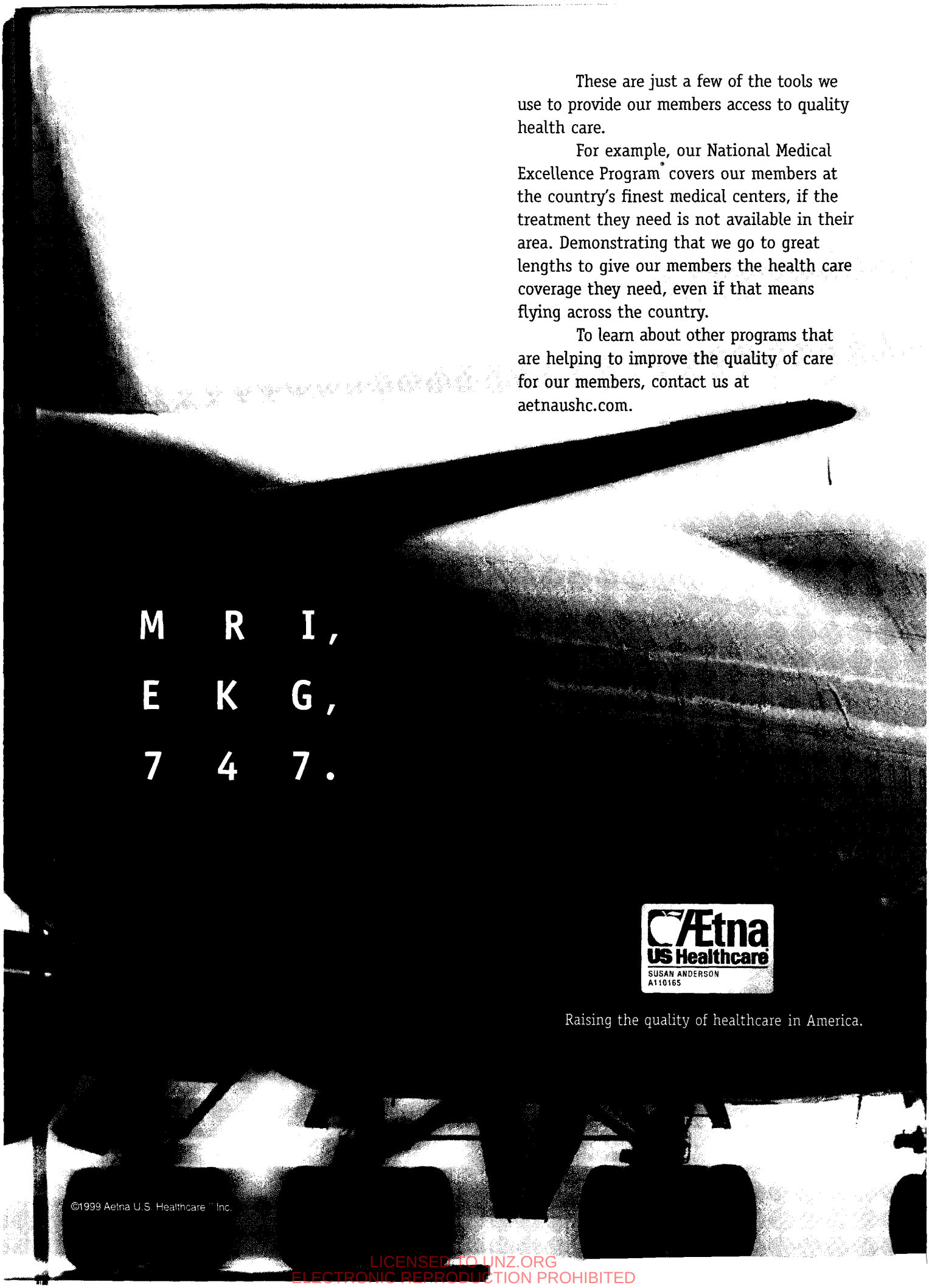

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■ LETTERS ■

A LESSON FROM KID BROTHER

Conservatives may indeed engage in grade inflation when they give George W. Bush's education speech an A+ ("The Week," Sept. 27). But NATIONAL REVIEW may be the crabby professor in downgrading the significance of Bush's intent to convert federal Title I dollars to parental-choice vouchers when public schools have continued to fail. The Texas governor has wisely taken a page from the boldest education-reform playbook in the land—that of his kid brother Jeb, governor of Florida, who dares to defy the National Education Association monopolists by offering families tuition vouchers. As long as big brother takes his cue from Jeb on education, he will deserve much better than a gentleman's C.

Robert Holland
Arlington, Va.

MONKEY BUSINESS

Two hallmarks of "scientific" creationism are misunderstanding and misrepresentation of scientific results. Patrick Glynn's "Monkey on Our Backs" (Sept. 13) is guilty of both.

Contrary to Glynn's claim, evolutionary biologists do not argue that "all life and species can be explained solely by chance mechanisms." Natural selection involves both mutation and selection, and the selection component is largely non-random.

He elevates "intelligent design" to the status of a "theory," despite the fact that it makes no predictions, is unfalsifiable, offers no directions for further research, and is not supported by any body of work in the peer-reviewed scientific literature. He states that the anthropic principle has generated a "vast literature," but fails to recognize that this literature is almost entirely popular interpretation, not peer-reviewed research. Finally, it is simply untrue that "it has been established that the simplest version of DNA contains *more information* than is contained in all the laws of chemistry and physics." Glynn's primary source is a neocreationist tract written by a lawyer; the source it cites does not support the claim. How could it? We simply do not currently know "all the laws of chemistry and physics"; perhaps there are infinitely many.

Glynn's commentary is an unwitting example of why we need more science education, not less, in our schools.

Jeffrey Shallit
Waterloo, Ontario

Patrick Glynn replies: *Why does Darwinian dogma turn scientists into Philadelphia lawyers? After a round or two of semantic nitpicking, Jeffrey Shallit tries to score with misrepresentation. "The reason that there are principles of biology that cannot be deduced from the laws of physics and chemistry lies . . . in the mathematical fact that the genetic information content for constructing even the simplest organism is much larger than the information content of these laws." As Shallit well knows, since he asked me and I told him, the foregoing claim comes not just from some "neocreationist tract" but rather from—inconveniently for him—the leading text on information theory and molecular biology, published by Cambridge University Press. That's one peer-reviewed work, evidently, we're not going to hear about.*

TOUGH GUY

If the Clinton presidency has taught us anything, it is that a politician's character matters far more than his policy positions. So while Eric Fettmann admirably details the policy successes of Rudy Giuliani's terms as New York City mayor ("Rudy of the Right," Sept. 27), he shortchanges the crucial feature that distinguishes Hizzoner from the hapless Republicans on Capitol Hill: guts. Giuliani has the willingness to be disliked by the press and the Al Sharptons of the world that a Republican needs to survive and succeed in a liberal mecca. Beltway Republicans roll over for President Clinton at every opportunity; Giuliani takes the heat that is ever-present in a reformer's kitchen.

Any national opinion poll reveals something social-conservative litmus-testers don't want you to see: What matters most to all Republicans, from Christian conservatives to libertarians, is not fringe issues like abortion, immigration, or gay rights. Law and order, education, and the maintenance of civil society are where their worries lie. And on all those fronts, Guiliani has shown guts where congressional tough-talkers have shown their tails.

Andrew G. Biggs
Washington, D.C.

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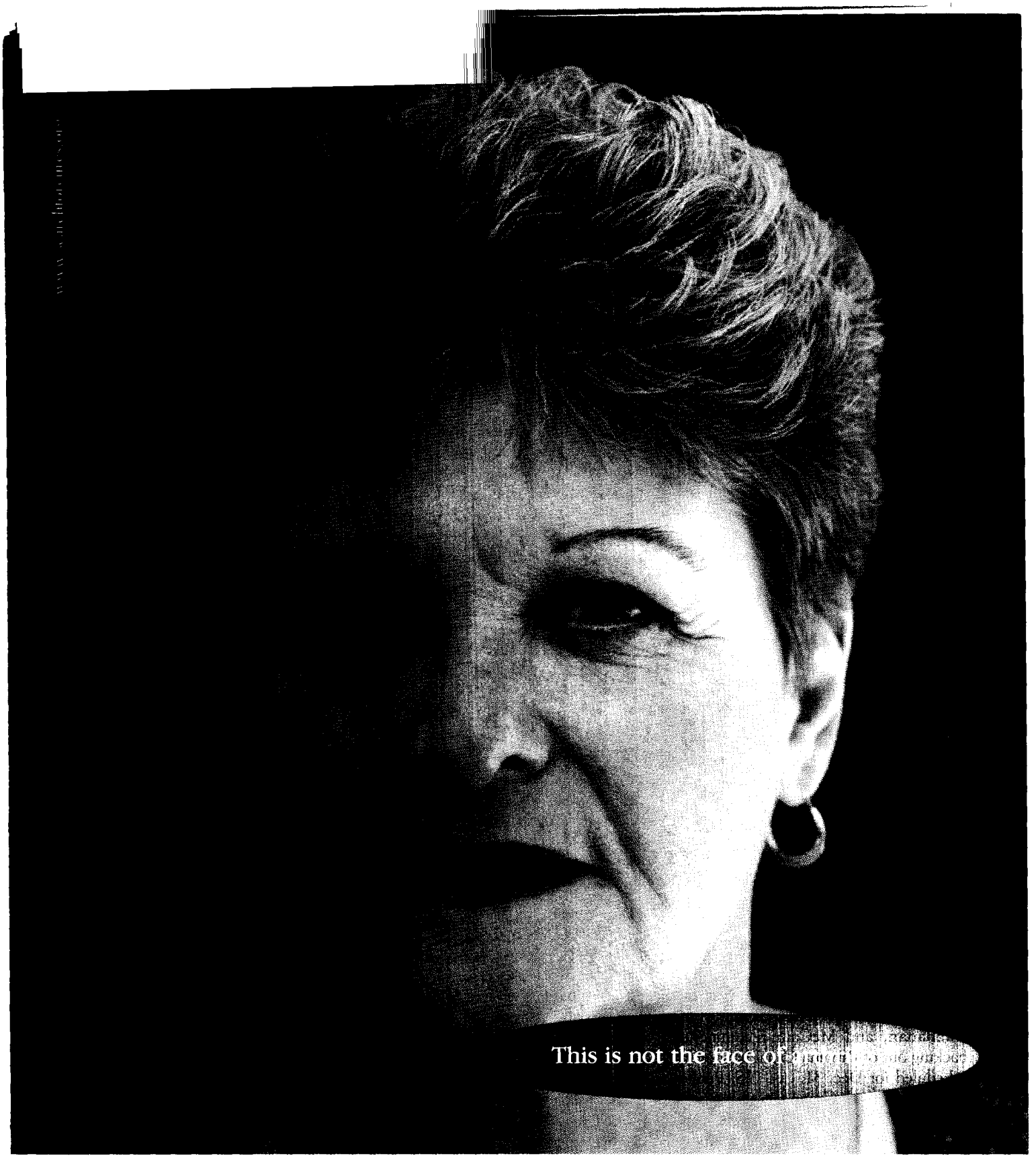

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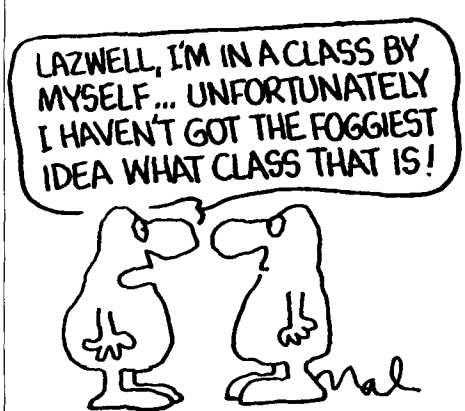
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ In New York *Daily News*, Rep. **Jose Serrano** (D., N.Y.) describes conversation with **Hillary Clinton** adviser **Harold Ickes** about First Lady's tardy opposition to White House clemency for Puerto Rican terrorists: "I said, 'Listen, don't insult me by telling me that it was done because of a philosophical position, because she didn't have that position three weeks ago.'" . . . Hillary refuses to say whether she supports clemency for convicted Israeli spy **Jonathan Pollard**, now serving life sentence. . . . Vice President **Al Gore**, addressing terrorism in 1996: "If you plot terror or act on those designs, within our borders or without, against American citizens, we will hunt you down and stop you cold." . . . Gore on Clinton's FALN order: "I'm not going to stand in judgment of his decision." . . . Sen. **Chuck Schumer** (D., N.Y.): "The burden of proof is on the administration to prove why clemency should be granted. I have repeatedly requested information on these cases. I have been given no such information." . . . **Robert Lichter** of Center for Media and Public Affairs: "It used to be that Washington admired Hollywood for its sex and Hollywood admired Washington for its power. . . . These days, Washington admires Hollywood for its power and Hollywood admires Washington for its sex."

■ In *20/20* interview, **Sam Donaldson** asks Sen. **John McCain** (R., Ariz.) if he used to be a "womanizer." McCain: "Well, yes. Well, I certainly pursued the fairer sex, and I had some modicum of success, yes." . . . **Gary Bauer, Pat Buchanan**, and McCain recommend backing out of Panama Canal handover, scheduled for Dec. 31. . . . U.S. Public Interest Research Group reports 82 percent of **Bill Bradley**'s fundraising comes in checks for $1,000, the maximum individual limit. Rate is 74 percent for **George W. Bush** and 66 percent for Gore. . . . Syndicated columnist **Joseph Sobran** runs for vice president on Constitution Party ticket. . . . Liberal environmental group Friends of the Earth endorses Bradley. . . . In ABC News interview, **George Stephanopoulos** asks Bradley if he agrees with Gore statement last year calling Clinton one of America's greatest presidents. Bradley: "Frankly, I'd pick **Lincoln**, probably **Washington, FDR, Woodrow Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Thomas Jefferson, James K. Polk**." . . . Three former members of Grateful Dead perform at Gore fundraiser. . . . **Jimmy Carter** tells Emory University audience he was "thrilled" to learn **Elvis Presley** was a sixth cousin.

■ As N.J. Gov. **Christie Todd Whitman** (R.) abandons 2000 Senate race, Sen. **Mitch McConnell** (R., Ky.) asks: "Why doesn't **Steve Forbes** go for it?" Filing deadline for candidacy is next April. . . . "Republicans will pick up 10 or 11 [House] seats in Texas, without even doing any dramatic gerrymandering after the next census," says GOP consultant



Craig Murphy in *The Hill*. . . . Former Rep. **Bob Dornan** (R., Calif.) plans to challenge Rep. **Dana Rohrabacher** (R., Calif.) for his House seat. . . . "I hate the IRS!" writes Fla. governor **Jeb Bush** (R.) in e-mail message, according to *St. Petersburg Times*. . . . Senate adds $4 million to budget for National Endowment for the Arts. . . . Rep. **Christopher Shays** (R., Conn.) tells *Environmental News*: "I would love it if 60 percent of Connecticut were owned by the government or in wilderness."

■ Immigrants were 9.3 percent of U.S. population last year, up from 7.9 percent in 1990, says Census Bureau. . . . Young America's Foundation surveys college course catalogs and identifies most politically biased. University of Michigan, currently target of lawsuit over racial-preference policies, offers course titled "Affirmative Action," whose "objective is to begin the process of cogent action and to develop the language to articulate affirmative action as a right and not a benefit." . . . Former Atlanta mayor **Andrew Young** at NAACP event: "I think the public-school system has had a monopoly that's gotten a little stodgy and it needs to be shaken up." . . . **Willie Breazell** resigns as president of NAACP's Colorado Springs chapter following criticism from national office for his support of school choice. . . . Gov. **John Engler** (R.) names former NR contributing editor **Stephen J. Markman** to Mich. supreme court. . . . Project for All Deliberate Speed, headed by **Clint Bolick, Linda Chavez, Ward Connerly**, and **Edwin Meese**, sends letter to all 50 state attorneys general urging compliance with Supreme Court rulings on racial preferences. . . . On recent conference announcement from Washington University School of Law, Hon. **Vojtech Cepl**, a judge of the Constitutional Court of the Czech Republic, includes among accomplishments: "Listed on Secret Register as Enemy of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, 1971-89."

■ U.N. special envoy **Carl Bildt**: "There is no exit strategy for us . . . in the Balkans. . . . We are in there for a very long time." . . . Russian money-laundering stories explode in press, but come as no surprise to readers of NR's late "Gekko" column. . . . Many Russians believe terrorist **Osama bin Laden** visited Chechnya and may be financing Moscow bombings. . . . Greece expresses support for Turkey's EU membership for first time. . . . U.N. admits Pacific states of Kiribati, Nauru, and Tonga, raising number of member countries to 188. . . . Swiss launch $10 million publicity campaign to show there is more to their country than "greedy banks, Heidi, and chocolate."

■ The new moral equivalence? Rep. **James A. Leach** (R., Ia.) writes on Russian thievery in *New York Times* op-ed: "America may be as challenged today by the threat of a deterioration of values—galloping corruption—as it was yesterday by Marxist ideology." **NR**

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THE WEEK

■ NOT A JOKE: What follows is the opening paragraph of a review by Marc Fisher of Ron Hansen's book *Hitler's Niece* in the *Washington Post Book World:* "Hitler and Nixon, our two great obsessions of the latter half of this century, have won places in the pantheon of darkness, great evil figures, moody and mysterious yet ordinary and pathetic. Nixon, at least, is ours—an American crook, roiling with petty jealousies and hates."

■ One of the local references in Bill Bradley's campaign kickoff in Crystal City, Mo., was to the Mississippi. "With its numberless streams and tributaries coming together, the Mississippi River is like democracy itself." With its numberless paragraphs not quite coming together, Bradley's speech was like the Mississippi itself—long, lazy, and without any clear sense of where it was going, through its many bends. A good announcement speech can hit specific issues; more important, it articulates the themes from which a candidate's issues arise. Bradley's did neither. He called for "a new kind of leadership," without saying where he would go; he urged Americans to "renew our faith in each other," without explaining what justifies our fidelity. Lost in the slow solemn flow of bromides was any precise picture of him—the intense evangelical he was in college, the semi-supply-sider he became in the early '80s, or the race-baiting left-winger he is today.

■ A three-judge panel unanimously cleared Kenneth Starr's legal team on charges that it leaked grand-jury information during the Lewinsky scandal. The charges stemmed from a January 31 *New York Times* article stating that, according to "several associates," Starr saw no constitutional impediment to indicting President Clinton before he left office. Allegations of leaking by Starr—in this case and less sensational ones—launched a thousand talk shows and front-page headlines. The White House reacted to the *Times* article by requesting that a judge investigate. The panel's ruling in favor of Starr has made much less of a splash. Tellingly, the *Times* applauded the judges' support for the "public's right to know," but neglected to reconsider the attacks on Starr begun by the Clinton smear squad and dutifully echoed in the *Times*. For some, it seems, Kenneth Starr is a special case, guilty even after proven innocent.

■ In a bipartisan vote, the Missouri legislature overrode Democratic governor Mel Carnahan to ban partial-birth abortion. A federal judge immediately blocked the ban, as usual; almost all the federal judges who have ruled on the matter have said that the Constitution does not allow infanticide to be banned. Also as usual, Republicans in Washington reacted with silence. They regularly declaim against partial-birth abortion; they also regularly exhort conservatives to support the GOP, despite its flaws, because control of the judiciary is so important. Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Orrin Hatch, a presidential candidate, inveighs against judicial activism on the stump. Yet in one week in September, the Republican Senate confirmed six more Clinton nominees to the federal bench—six more judges who are guaranteed, by the president's own publicly announced litmus test, to defeat any attempt by the people and their elected representatives to ban partial-birth abortion. Judges who will do that are likely to bend the Constitution in many other areas as well. And more such judges are on the way. Clinton's nominee James A. Wynn Jr. would tip the Fourth Circuit, the site of several recent victories for constitutionalism, to the liberals; another nominee, Elena Kagan, would extend liberal influence in the important D.C. Circuit. If Senate Republicans mean what they say about the courts, they will stop these nominations.

■ Elizabeth Dole came out strongly against the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and Dan Quayle already had; the rest of the Republican field should follow suit. The treaty is a major threat to the safety and reliability of our nuclear deterrent. To be effective in keeping the peace, our deterrent must be credible; to be credible, it must be regularly tested. Furthermore, the treaty is unacceptably vague. For example, it would allow Russia to conduct hydronuclear testing, even as the U.S., favoring a stricter interpretation, bars itself from doing so. Also, the verification provisions in the treaty are plainly inadequate. As it becomes clear that there are insufficient votes in the Senate to pass the treaty, the administration may quietly urge GOP leader Trent Lott to shelve it. Lott ought not to accede to this request. There should be a full debate on the treaty, and a complete airing of its flaws—leading to its demise.

■ Will Republicans ever learn? GOP governor Don Sundquist of Tennessee has broken his "no new taxes" pledge and is expected to propose in a few weeks the biggest tax increase in Tennessee history. The state is one of only nine left with the huge economic advantage of not having an income tax. Sundquist's grand plan is to create one. Why? To close a budget shortfall caused by massive spending under his own administration. In the 1990s, Tennessee's budget has grown twelfth fastest in the nation—and twice the rate of population and inflation. The conservative Tennessee Family

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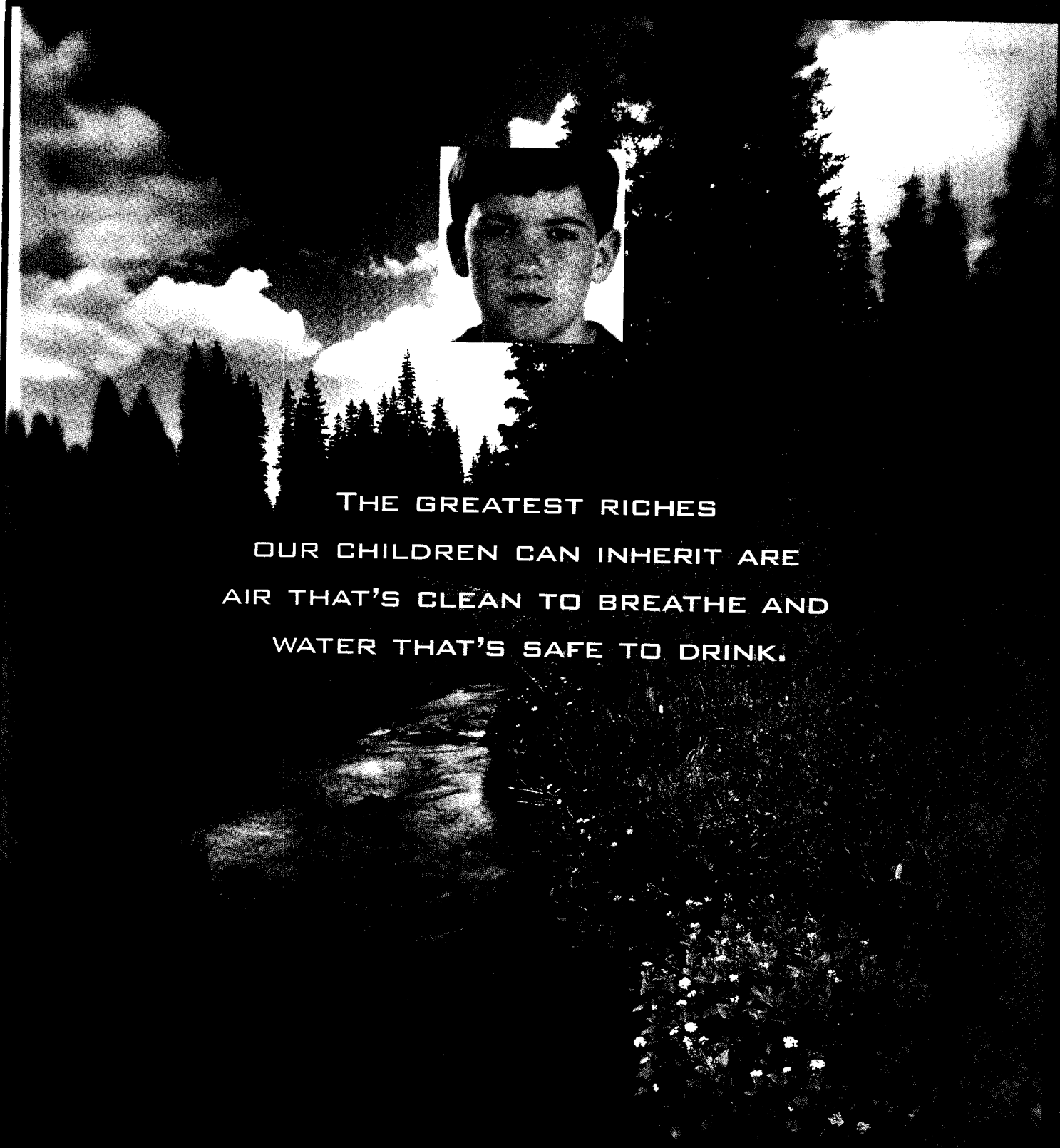

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WHO'D O' THUNK IT?

Thought to be the tortoise, Bradley
Listens up a storm,
Which Al Gore, the real dumb bunny,
Treats as chloroform.
Now New Hampshire is a toss-up
While, in New York State,
Democrats go turtle-crazy
As their eyes gyrate.

—W. H. VON DREELE

Institute is rallying the troops to defeat Sundquist's "read my lips" betrayal. If Sundquist has his way, his legacy will be a more obese budget, a Republican income tax, and a political civil war in the Tennessee GOP. A footnote: Guess who's George W. Bush's Tennessee campaign chairman?

■ Immigration will hit a ten-year low this year, but not because Congress or the Clinton administration has reduced admission levels. Rather, the Immigration and Naturalization Service has shifted resources and personnel from green cards to naturalization. Roughly 1.7 million immigrants have citizenship applications pending, and Vice President Gore no doubt wants them registered to vote next year. In 1996, his office oversaw an election-year naturalization rush which—oops!—resulted in 180,000 immigrants' gaining citizenship without receiving mandatory criminal-background checks. The current effort will certainly reduce the naturalization backlog, but will also create a new one for green cards—meaning more immigrants on the waiting list for legal entry will come here illegally and adjust their status later. The Gore administration can always take care of them by 2004.

■ Just before midnight on August 9, a SWAT team of the El Monte, Calif., police force stormed the home of Mario Paz, 64, as part of a drug investigation. The police had no evidence that Paz, or anyone else in his family, was involved in drug dealing. Rather, a former neighbor, suspected of dealing, sometimes used the Paz residence as a mailing address, and police had confiscated 400 pounds of marijuana at another such address. In the course of the raid, Paz was shot twice in the back. The El Monte PD first said that he had been armed, then that he had been reaching for a drawer where two pistols were subsequently found. This is no doubt a case of error rather than evil intent. But those who write the laws also have a duty—to evaluate honestly the wisdom of the laws. The FBI has launched an investigation into the officers' behavior. Worth investigating, too, are the assumptions about drugs, and how best to curtail their use, that sent the SWAT team to the home of Mario Paz in the first place.

■ In November 1998, the District of Columbia voted on a referendum legalizing medical marijuana, but the results were not announced because Congress (which has final authority over D.C. law) had forbidden District election officials to count the votes. Ten months later, a judge shot down the congressional gag rule, and we learn that medical pot won in a walk, with 69 percent of the vote. Georgia Republican Bob Barr called the tally "irrelevant to anyone other than the drug-legalization activists," since Congress will not approve the law. But the idea is relevant to most District voters, as it is to majorities in seven states that have approved similar measures. N.B.: In November 1998, Bob Barr won reelection with 55 percent of the vote, which means he has significantly less support than medical marijuana.

■ Wind power is supposed to be a big part of the "sustainable-energy future" urged by Vice President Gore and the environmental establishment. Such "alternative energy technologies hold the key to curbing air pollution and global warming," according to the Natural Resources Defense Council. Now some environmentalists are crying foul (fowl?) over the dozens of birds, including endangered condors, that are decimated by wind turbines. Last month, the National Audubon Society started a campaign to stop Enron's proposed wind farm in the Tehachapi Mountains, north of Los Angeles. "It is hard to imagine a worse idea than putting a condor Cuisinart next door to critical condor habitat," Audubon's Daniel Beard told the press. According to the group, "more eagles are killed by wind turbines than were lost in the disastrous Exxon Valdez oil spill." Cynics will be excused for noticing that the green attacks on wind power follow a predictable pattern: A new energy source is praised only until someone tries to use it. Wind power, like nuclear power and hydropower before it, is falling out of favor because it might actually work. Support for alternative energy, it seems, is support for alternatives we don't have.

■ Indonesia, the fourth most populous country in the world, is an important ally. Any strategy to contain China must presuppose a strong and friendly Indonesia. But the country's stability, unity, and friendship are all now endangered—both by the violence in East Timor and by the fragility of the country's transition to democracy. Indonesia's army must be brought to recognize that East Timor, having voted overwhelmingly for independence in an August referendum, must be let go, and that its role in the country's politics is to support democratization. The Clinton administration has been correct to keep U.S. combat troops out of East Timor; others can do the job. But we are right also to lend logistical support to the Australians, et al., for our strategic stake is clear.

■ Terrorist bombs have blown to rubble four apartment buildings in Russia in the last month, killing almost 300 people, and wounding many more. It is not too much to say that panic has seized the population, especially in Moscow.

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Legislation, mergers, and the Internet have many companies scrambling to look for new lines of business. Except one.

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Vigilante groups now guard premises, and search for suspects. The trouble is that the enemy has no name. President Yeltsin and his latest prime minister, Vladimir Putin, accuse Muslim extremists, pointing a finger at the Chechens. Denying the allegation, various Chechen spokesmen manage all the same to sound extremely satisfied. The bombs are most likely revenge for the brutal clumsiness of Russian military measures in the Muslim republics of Chechnya and now Dagestan. Accustomed to decades of Soviet conspiracy and lies, though, many Russians look for the hidden hand and believe that the Kremlin itself is placing the bombs. Why? To have a pretext for declaring a state of emergency, canceling the elections due in the near future, and leaving Yeltsin in power. On the Moscow streets, anyone with a vaguely Central Asian appearance risks being rounded up, marched off, and deported. These are bad times there, becoming worse.

■ September was a busy month for the Clinton administration's long-suffering North Korea team, which has been attempting for years to moderate that regime's behavior through diplomatic negotiations. First, the State Department announced a "breakthrough": In the latest round of talks, the North Korean side had offered assurances—unwritten, of course—that Pyongyang would not test-fire its newest ballistic missile (reportedly capable of reaching American soil) if the U.S. would lift trade sanctions against it. Then Clinton's North Korea envoy, former defense chief William J. Perry, briefed Congress on his long-awaited, still-secret "Perry Report," which is said to propose a normalization of diplomatic and economic relations with North Korea in return for a once-and-for-all, this-time-we-really-mean-it halt to the North Korean missile and nuclear-weapons programs. A few days later, the administration suspended some U.S. economic sanctions against North Korea—one of them in place since Pyongyang launched the Korean War. We wonder: Has any of our Pyongyang emissaries stopped to ask why Kim Jong Il would agree to a deal without an immediate cash payoff? Given Pyongyang's perverse and destructive economic practices, North Korea stands to gain almost nothing from its new commercial opportunities in U.S. markets. Could it be that the North Korean side sees this latest "breakthrough" as merely the first step to major new aid transfers from America—and will revert to its familiar shakedown techniques if the gambit doesn't work?

■ The Hungarian revolution of 1956 seemed to bear out George Orwell's grim prediction that the future would be a jackboot stamping on the human face forever. The Soviets and their Hungarian stooges killed and wounded thousands, and drove 200,000 into exile. In the town of Mosonmagyarovar, demonstrators marched in front of a barracks to demand the removal of its Communist insignia. Istvan Dudas, a colonel in the barracks, ordered his men to open fire, killing at least 50 and wounding about 80 more. The world learned the details because several Western journalists happened to witness the whole atrocity. Brought to trial in 1993, Dudas and three associates were acquitted on the grounds that there is a 15-year statute of limitations on murder charges. The Hungarian Supreme Court ruled that these cases should be retried as crimes against humanity, which have no time limit. As the new trial opened on September 14, local people disrupted the court with shouts of "I will not rest until you hang!" Dudas, now 75, claims that he did not give the order to fire, saying, "I might be acquitted in the end, but I shall go mad by that time." He's lucky to have a choice: Better mad than dead.

■ Germans continue to suffer through a seemingly permanent recession, with the jobless rate averaging 11 percent in recent years (and 20 percent in the east). The top personal-tax rate is 53 percent, with a 5.5 percent unification surcharge. The VAT sales tax is 16 percent, the corporate tax 40 percent. There's even a tithe on the incomes of church members, paid to the government and then distributed to the ministries. All of this—along with a high minimum wage and rigid labor laws—has impelled giant German companies such as Daimler-Benz, BMW, and Deutschebank to set up beachheads in the U.S. The only answer from Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, a Social Democrat, is to seek a $16 billion reduction in transfer payments; no deregulation or reduction in marginal tax rates is in sight. The German electorate at last appears to be revolting. Schröder and his party suffered four consecutive electoral defeats in one month. Adding insult to injury, the stock market came flickering to life in the same month, rising 13 percent. Bill Clinton and Tony Blair have made fashionable their "Third Way" model—social welfarism combined with a dose of budget discipline—but the road to their success was paved by deregulation and tax cuts in the 1980s. In Germany, where no such reforms took place, the Third Way is turning out to be a dead end.

■ The much-heralded new television show *West Wing*, starring Martin Sheen as the president, is an inside look at what Hollywood producers think day-to-day life in a liberal Democratic White House should look like. But it is not about the Clinton administration, the producers insist. As proof, the show includes one scene in which the chief of staff uses the words "nerd" and "geek," and the president's secretary admonishes him, saying she can't tolerate "that kind of language, not in this room." Betty Currie she ain't. Then there is Rob Lowe, who made such a splash at the 1988 Democratic convention when he videotaped himself with two teenage girls. He plays a Stephanopolite character who sleeps with a hooker by mistake. Of course, no treatment of contemporary politics would be complete without the demonization of Christian conservatives. In *West Wing*, we meet three varieties of zealot: the dumb, the bigoted, and the naïve. The show recently caved to NAACP pressure and is hurriedly adding black characters. Surely the program's producers will be as accommodating if similarly challenged from the right.

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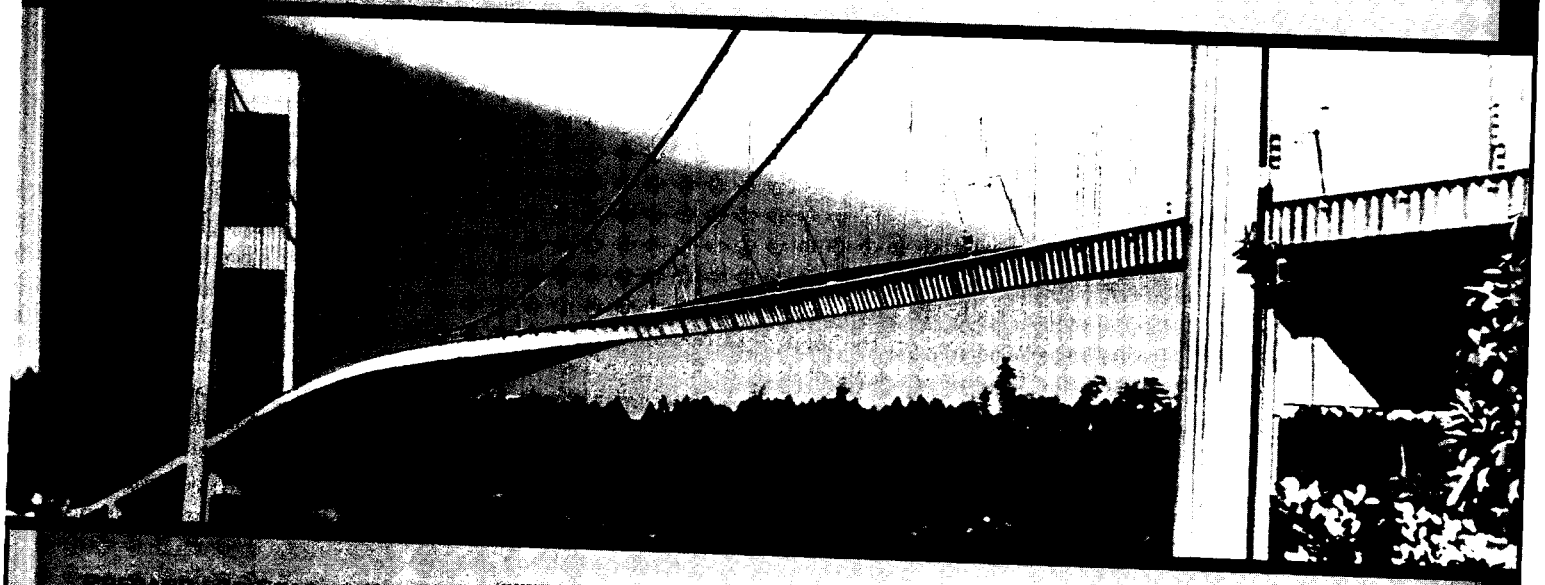

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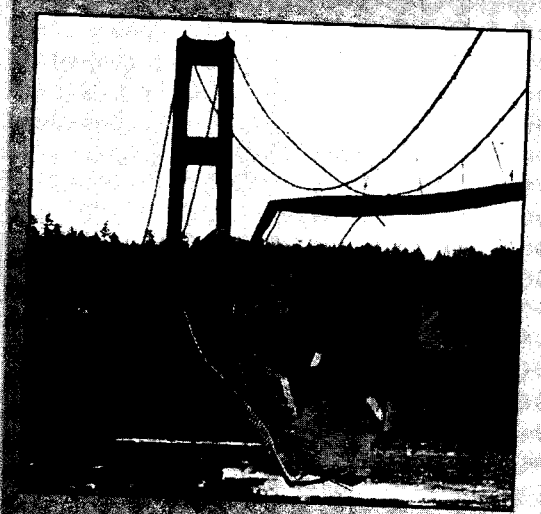

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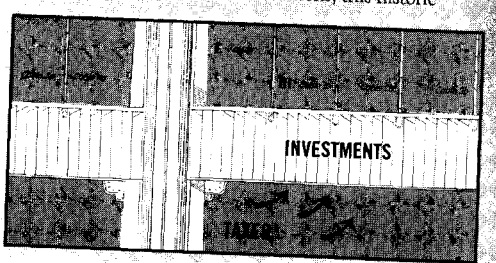

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■ President Clinton, it seems, may have some difficulty in joining a golf club when he and the Missus move to Westchester County. Winged Foot? Nope—too long a waiting list. Blind Brook? Forget it. And on down the list. Of course, screening according to acceptable behavior has long been one of the functions of a club. When J. P. Morgan put up a rough-hewn business associate for membership in the palatial Union Club on Park Avenue, the fellow was blackballed. Infuriated, Morgan had Stanford White erect an even more palatial club over on Fifth Avenue, which took the fellow in. Maybe Clinton can get his sugar daddy Terry McAuliffe to build him his own 18.

■ Until Raisa Gorbachev appeared on the scene, all Kremlin wives looked rather like Nikita Khrushchev in a dyed wig. She was the first with any style, and, as such, she did a great deal to create the impression that Russia was on the map. Hated as she may have been at home, because she seemed so privileged, she was the first Kremlin figure to do charity work and help the poor, a most un-Soviet activity. R.I.P.

■ NATIONAL REVIEW is in search of an executive secretary. Those interested should apply to Kathryn Jean Lopez at 215 Lexington Ave., 4th floor, NYC, N.Y. 10016. They may also e-mail her at lopezk@nationalreview.com or fax her at (212) 849-2835.

CAMPAIGN 2000

After He's Gone

IN the opening pages of his 1988 memoir *Right from the Beginning*, Patrick J. Buchanan described his differences with Jack Kemp—among them, that Kemp had acquired the congressional vice of calling everybody "my good friend." The air has been thick with "my good friend" in recent weeks, directed by various Republican worthies at Buchanan, whom they implore to remain with the GOP. Neither Buchanan nor his followers can be impressed by this performance, especially since the worthies in question previously treated him with disdain.

The truth is, Republicans cannot do much to affect Buchanan's decision. For that reason, it would be pointless to continue begging Buchanan to stay. The other approach Republicans have taken—telling him to go, and good riddance—is equally pointless. The strategic imperative is rather to formulate a response for the aftermath of his departure.

The temptation for the presumptive nominee, George W. Bush, will be to use Buchanan to burnish his own centrist credentials. The emerging line among Republican officialdom is that Buchanan's departure will actually help Bush: When Democrats accuse Bush of extremism, he can point to Buchanan's exit as evidence that the "far Right" actually opposes him.

This strategy would probably backfire, benefiting Buchanan and hurting Bush. Conservatives of all stripes are used to being attacked as "divisive," "extremists," on the "far right," etc. Attacking Buchanan with what he once called "the swear words of the establishment" will only make him more attractive to the people who might be debating whether to vote for him. These are people who feel affection toward Buchanan as a person, even if they have not followed him on his peculiar course. They will interpret the attacks as proof that Buchanan is with them—and that Bush is not.

This kind of attack, far from refuting Democratic arguments, would tend to confirm them. If opposition to abortion per se makes Buchanan "extreme"—which it certainly does in the eyes of the media—it makes Bush "extreme" too. Ditto for Buchanan's positions on racial preferences, gay rights, bilingual education, etc., which if they are not Bush's positions are certainly those of the Republican party as a whole. Buchanan's restrictionist position on immigration is not "extreme"; several polls suggest it is the position of a large majority of the public and even of most immigrants, backed by the common-sense insight, unrelated to race, that there is a limit to the assimilative powers even of America. Buchanan's protectionism, too, is shared by large segments of the public. Those of Buchanan's positions that deserve to be criticized are not so much "extreme" as wrong, destructive, and untrue to conservative traditions. That is the case Republicans should be making about Buchanan. It is not one they can make by calling him a far-right extremist.

THE BUDGET

Try, Try Again

CAPITOL HILL veterans often say that there are three parties in Congress: Republicans, Democrats, and appropriators—the congressmen who decide how to spend federal revenues. At the moment, this third party is allied with the Democrats. As expected, Congress is going to break the spending caps it set for itself in 1997, by at least $14 billion. That number is small by government standards, but it means that the entire non-Social Security surplus is going to be spent. This is not a good precedent.

Worse, leading Republican appropriators are trying to stall the defense-funding bill so that it will be on the table if there are any last-minute negotiations between Congress and President Clinton. With conservatives still holding their breath about a priority of theirs—defense—Clinton will have more leverage to extract concessions on spending. Meanwhile, Appropriations chairman Ted Stevens, the Alaska Republican, is giving other senators gag-gift ties depicting him as a Charles Atlas-like figure, holding up the Capitol dome while money falls out. Among some Republicans, shakedowns of U.S. taxpayers are always good for a laugh.

If Republicans are unwilling or unable to make conservative arguments about the size of government, will they at least continue to argue about its cost? Bill Archer's tax-cutting bill was a good start, re-establishing that Republican policy aims to

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reduce tax rates and promote growth. Public support for that bill has grown, especially among the expanding investor class. It has strong support in those polls that make clear that the bill does not affect Social Security or Medicare; its components—such as estate-tax relief, a reduction of the marriage penalty, expanded IRAs—have strong support in polls when they are specified.

Now that Clinton has vetoed the bill, Republican leaders are of a mind to do nothing. They do not want a deal that cuts taxes microscopically at the price of even more spending. Better, they say, to keep the issue alive than to let Clinton, and by extension Al Gore, pretend to be a tax-cutter. This logic seems sound to us—as long as keeping the issue alive does not mean, in practice, burying it. The way to maintain the offensive on taxes is not just to talk about them, although that is important, but also to send Clinton the individual components of the bill as stand-alone measures. Today Clinton can claim to want some tax cuts, just not large "irresponsible" ones. Let him (and Gore) go on record against relief from the estate tax and from the alternative minimum tax, against indexing capital-gains taxes, against full deductibility for health insurance. There should be no deal. But more important, there should be no retreat.

SOUTH AMERICA

The Fire in Colombia

THE Clinton administration has been getting very nervous about Colombia, for good reason. Gains by the Communist guerrillas, increased drug trafficking, and the collapse of President Pastrana's peace plans have combined to wake up the White House. It now appears that Bogota will ask the United States to provide nearly half of a gigantic $7.5 billion package, whose purpose is to solve Colombia's problems.

If the package works, it will be cheap at the price—considering what we now spend on various anti-drug efforts, and thinking, too, of the increase in trafficking should more of Colombia fall under guerrilla control. The question is, Are Washington and Bogota serious about an effort that includes a military dimension? The guerrillas are now winning the war, and they will not negotiate until they face the prospect of losing. And, as we have seen everywhere from Somalia to Haiti to Kosovo, the Clinton administration gets weak at the knees when the shooting starts. Administration spokesmen like to downplay the military side of things and emphasize the need for social and economic reform in Colombia: They call this a "holistic approach" to defeating the guerrillas. If this is only a tactic meant to get the program through Congress, so be it. But if it means the administration is unwilling to help Colombia build a modern army, the entire effort is doomed right from the start.

The American role should include lots of advice, training, technology, and, inevitably, money, but few soldiers on the ground. In the 1980s, we sent a few dozen advisers to El Salvador, and to Colombia as well we should in principle be supplying assistance, not manpower. We must, however, have it very clear in mind that this is not social work. A drug-rich and vicious guerrilla force controls half of Colombia, and it will need to be dislodged by force. It will not be pretty, and the guerrillas have the money for a huge public-relations campaign. Better not to start the whole project if we lack the guts to see it through militarily and politically. Congress should ask the president, secretaries Cohen and Albright, and national security adviser Sandy Berger to explain it all very clearly before saying yes.

CULTURE WATCH

'A Wave of Evil'

THE most wrenching quotation to come out of the Fort Worth massacre came from the 19-year-old worshipper who addressed Larry Gene Ashbrook as he fired away: "Sir, you don't have to be doing this." Sir—the deference of youth to age, even when one's elder is crazed and murderous. You don't have to be doing this—the witness of a believer, expressed even at the risk of his own life. This young person was lucky—Ashbrook did not kill him. Others were not: Among the seven victims was one who told Ashbrook that he needed Jesus in his life.

The congregation of Wedgwood Baptist Church takes comfort from promises. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

We now look for explanations. If we believed in the category of hate crimes, we could confidently file the Fort Worth massacre, along with the murder of Cassie Bernall at Columbine High School, and the attack on a student prayer circle in West Paducah, Ky., as anti-Christian hate crimes. All the victims were Christians, who were either praying, worshipping, or (like Cassie Bernall) confessing their faith. If we were hateful believers in hate crimes, we would know where to draw the penumbra of social blame: around all the cultured despisers of

THE BUCHANAN EFFECT

To get the feel, tune in to Rush.
His screener winnows out the crush.
But some get through, reminding one
Why sacking Rome was so much fun.
They don't believe the polls, nor do
They care why Gore is smilin' through;
And ABSOLUTELY they don't care
If W.'s left sucking air.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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Christian faith and practice in this country, from People for the American Way to Frank Rich. The Left never hesitates to identify the crime or its accessories when conservatives can be implicated: Hence, Jerry Falwell and other anti-gay preachers were held to be responsible for the death of Matthew Shepard, and the anti-government rhetoric of the GOP class of 1994 was implicated in the Oklahoma City bombing.

But it is wrong, morally and intellectually, to adopt the idiocies of one's enemies. People like Larry Gene Ashbrook are more moved by inner fires than by outside influences. They brim with hatred for others, and for themselves; it is natural that they should lash out at people in the routines of normal life (which is precisely what they are bitterly alienated from): working, eating, going to church.

But there have always been evil nuts in America. The mystery is why they have lately been shooting up their neighbors. Liberals blame guns. But the country was awash in even more weaponry, proportionally, long before such violence became routine. If anything has been communicated through the ether, it may be a general lowering of impulse control. America in recent years has been bullish on authenticity—but not everything that is authentic should be immediately expressed.

Or perhaps Gov. Bush (no theologian) hit it, when he said the country seemed to be passing through "a wave of evil."

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ To: WFB
From: Ed [Capano]
Re: NR credit card

The good folks who operate the NR credit-card program inform me that when you mentioned it in this space last year there was an outstanding response. Please permit me another opportunity to inform our subscribers that this credit card is great for them (there are many benefits, no annual fee) and for NR—each time someone uses the card to make a purchase, MBNA America Bank, N.A., provides a small royalty to NR (at no cost to the card user). Hearty thanks to those who already have the NR credit card—we encourage you to use it regularly. As for those subscribers who yearn to get one of these great financial tools, they need only call MBNA at 1-800-523-7666 (mention priority code V6GE). Many thanks!

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Re Ellen P. Ward's request (July 12), "Consider replacing your use of the term 'Congressman' with 'Congressperson'":

We must immediately dispense with the superfluous and ungrammatical "your use of," if only to avoid the elitist, potentially racist "us" in "use." The sentence should read, "Consider replacing the term 'Congressman' with 'Congressperdaughter'" to get rid of the unacceptable "son." This leaves the ugly "he" in "the," where "she" won't do, because after "sh" it still ends in "he." We must substitute the neuter "it" (unless we use the new general personal pronoun "ge," with "ger," "gem," and "gen" for cases 2, 3, and 4, which would be too confusing for Americans without a clue on how to use pronouns). Hence, we get: "Consider replacing tit term 'Congressman' with 'Congressperdaughter.'"

This would offend Gerwoman-Americans (to eliminate the "man," Gerkind would do) because of the masculine "er." Using the neuter "das" where possible, and the feminine "sie" where pronunciation becomes difficult, we get: "Considdas replacing tit tsiem 'Congressman' with 'Congresspsiedaughtsie.'" This may offend hyphenated Americans still able to speak Arabic, Hebrew, Swahili, or another foreign language. Therefore, a U.N. committee of concerned feminines (if "gender" may stand for "sex," "feminine" is a good substitute for "female"; it avoids a recurring "male") should be appointed to invent a new Esperanto, free of offensive masculine terms, and be given the power to implement this new language in every country (this is a hint for a new initiative in the Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Gore election campaigns).

Yours sincerely,
David Broek
Galena, Ohio

Dear Mr. Broek: That is a smashing suggestion, the U.N. committee, and your demonstration is a classic in lucidity.

Cordially, WFB

Dear Mr. Buckley: Ms. Ellen P. Ward's letter to you regarding the use of "Congressperson" when referring to a member of Congress does not go far enough. Since the last syllable (son) refers to the male gender, the politically correct term of address for a female member of Congress is "Congressperdaughter." This, then, brings into question the use of "female" to refer to a member of the feminine sex. Again, the politically correct term should be "feperdaughter" (God created them male and feperdaughter). This gives rise to other absurdities, such as "woperdaughter" for "woman," "huperdaughterity" for "humanity," "woperdaughteracles" for handcuffs used on "feperdaughters." It then makes a work written by a "woperdaughter," a "woperdaughterscript."

I'm sure that I need not belabor the point.

Sincerely,
William F. Brna
Monongahela, Pa.

Dear Mr. Brna: Enough! We are swamped! Everybody gives up!

Cordially,

—WFB

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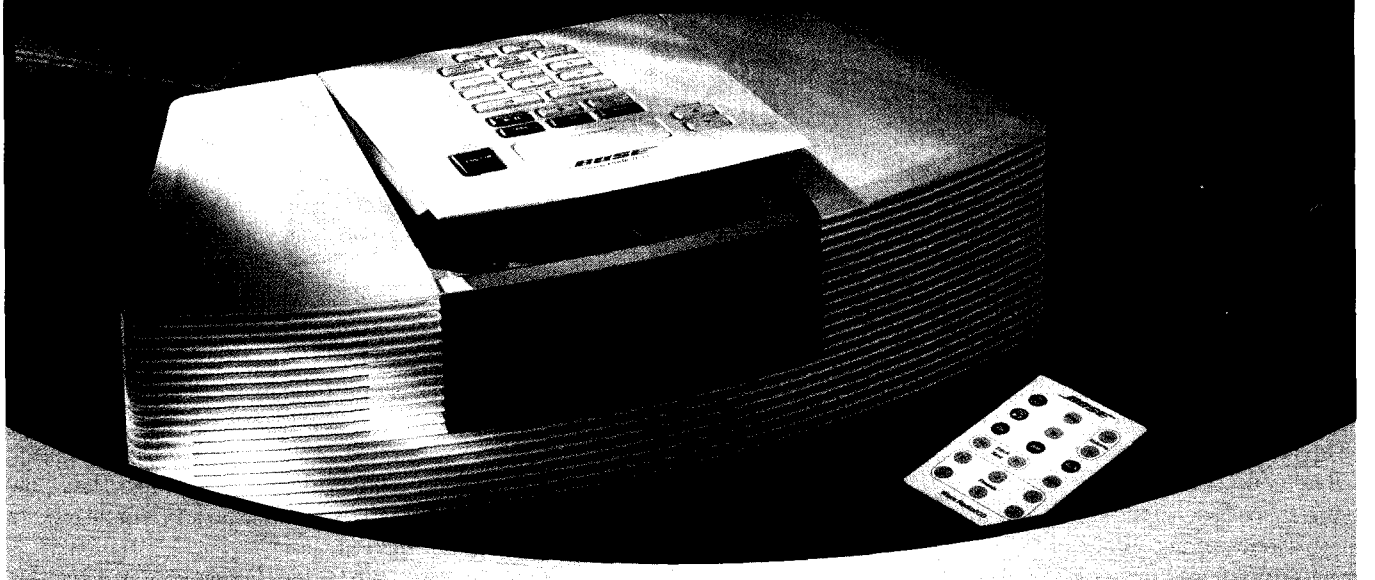

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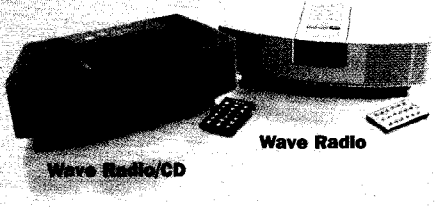

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■ POLITICS ■

Types of Right

How the conservatives break down.

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

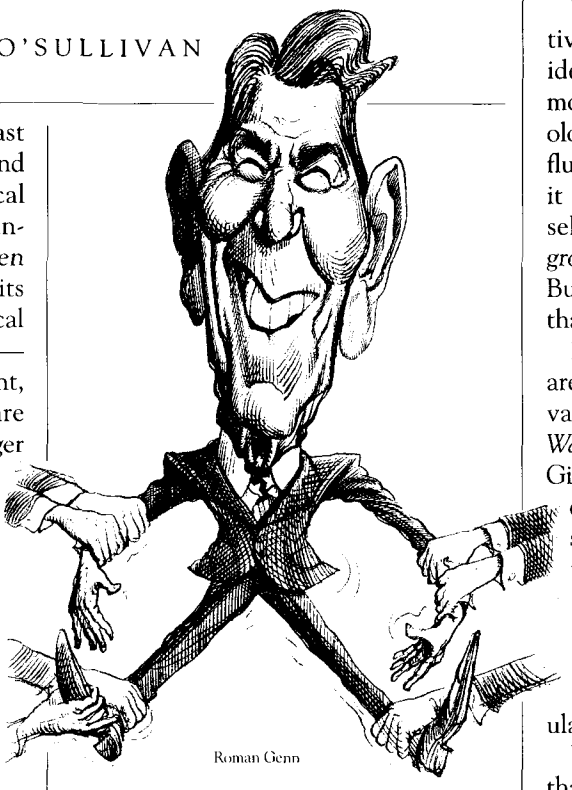
CONSERVATISM is an ornery beast that hibernates in the summer and wakes up in winter. When political storms rage and radicals attack the fundamental institutions of society, then conservatism emerges angrily from its cave to do battle. But when the political climate is mild and pleasant as now—with a rising Dow, low unemployment, moderate social policies like welfare reform, and no clear and present danger from Abroad—then conservatives either cultivate their gardens or, if they are philosophically minded, sit around in circles under the sun speculating on what the next battle will be about.

The conservatism of the future is being shaped, debated, and tested in these circles today. What are these groups? What do they believe? And which among them is likely to prevail?

An exhaustive list would be too exhausting. We can surely pass quickly over such factions as the Religious Right and the libertarians. Not because they are unimportant—quite the reverse. But we know their philosophies pretty well already, and neither is likely to change dramatically.

Now, what about the other factions? In no particular order, they are:

1. *The Tories.* For, ahem, significant historical reasons, Toryism has not been a major trend in American political thought. But it is the dominant tendency in George W. Bush's GOP. Nor do I mean that sarcastically. Toryism (properly understood, as they say) is the conviction that government is the art of managing the state—in Tory language, "carrying on the King's government." Whereas a radical wants power to implement his utopian vision, or a liberal seeks office to spread the blessings of liberty, a Tory accepts the burden of public duty in order to deal with problems as they crop up. His appeal to the voters is as follows:



Roman Genn

"Look here, you all know I am a patriotic, godfearing, and honest man with sensible views. And I will surround myself with similar people. We will do our best on your behalf. But we cannot go into details now because, as you will appreciate, we cannot forecast either what the problems or the solutions will be."

This is a conservatism with a far more respectable philosophical pedigree than you might suppose. If George W. Bush were less of a Tory (i.e., more self-consciously philosophical), he would now be quoting the distinguished British political theorist, the late Michael Oakeshott, who in the essay "Rationalism in Politics" made the point that politics is a practical rather than an intellectual activity and that therefore it is best learned not from books but from being apprenticed to a master. (Alas, George W. was apprenticed to his father.) That being so, it is perfectly consistent that George W. Bush has no house Tory philosopher. Of course, a number of distinguished conservative intellectuals have signed on to his campaign to advise. But they are social or foreign-policy conservatives in a more conventional American mold, who believe either that Gov. Bush is one of their number already or that he can be steered in the right direction by their sage advice.

Toryism, finally, may well be an effective governing philosophy for a non-ideological time like the present moment. If, however, new radical ideologies emerge from the post-Cold War flux to challenge American institutions, it is likely to be superseded by a more self-conscious and intellectually grounded conservatism. To which Gov. Bush might well reply: "I'll deal with that when it happens."

2. *Free-market Post-Nationalists.* These are classical liberals and business conservatives, such as Robert Bartley of the *Wall Street Journal* and perhaps Newt Gingrich, who think that globalization is eroding the nation-state and making socialism impossible. They see that, with trade barriers falling and capital markets likely to punish governments that overtax and overspend, national governments have much less power to raise domestic levels of tax and regulation.

What this theory ignores, however, is that the same trends are likely to encourage the rise of international versions of regulation (the Kyoto accords), taxation, and government. The European Union—a kind of cartel of governments—is the prototype of future supra-national bodies. For international socialists, moreover, supra-nationalism has the advantage of not being under effective democratic control—an advantage because the voters usually reject socialism. Most conservatives respond to these trends by defending national sovereignty against supra-national incursions. But the free-market post-nationalists are in a dilemma here. If they strengthen the nation-state, they may also strengthen its power to regulate and intervene. If they don't, they may find down the line that a larger and more remote bureaucracy has acquired the power to regulate over a wider area. Their visceral dislike of Pat Buchanan will probably mean that they opt for the greater risk.

3. *Nationalists.* This is a very big tent indeed, with a lot of fighting under the canvas. Some themes unite all national-

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ists—such as the opposition to the loss of national sovereignty described above. But they are divided seriously over other issues. Economic nationalists (Pat Buchanan, Ross Perot, Dick Gephardt), standing for protectionism, have grabbed most attention. But their essentially gloomy nostrums are unlikely to have mass appeal in a long boom when manufacturing plants and steelworks account for less than a quarter of the U.S. economy. Unless there is a collapse in the Dow, therefore, economic nationalism on its own seems likely to peter out—to the benefit of the small but doughty group of nationalists who favor free trade (e.g., former Democratic governor Richard Lamm, *Forbes* senior editor Peter Brimelow).

Cultural nationalists (e.g., former California governor Pete Wilson, Michael Lind, Ward Connerly, Lamm, Brimelow, and, except for immigration, Linda Chavez and John J. Miller) are growing in number as bilingualism, multiculturalism, and immigration become more pressing problems. This is likely to continue. For the dirty little secret of multiculturalism is that it maximizes ethnic tensions. Democrats have inadvertently confirmed this in recent years with blatant race-baiting appeals to minorities. In the past, cultural nationalists have attempted to soothe such tensions both by restricting immigration and by promoting a trans-ethnic common American culture and consciousness. This time, however, they will run up against the multicultural Right that for electoral reasons has embraced ethnic and linguistic diversity as a good thing in itself. Conservative multiculturalism has very few intellectual supporters (only one in fact, Nathan Glazer), but it has a very important political one—George W. Bush.

4. *National Greatness Lite Conservatives.* This faction is born of the insight of some neoconservatives that nationalism has a powerful appeal, but that it usually involves policies they dislike, such as lower immigration. It then searches around for policies that could be thought to express or forward national greatness. So far this has mainly meant building great buildings and having great national projects—generally without specifying very clearly what they are or detailing any sacrifices involved. But these are early days, and Rome wasn't built in a day.

5. *Evolutionary Conservatives.* This is an almost wholly intellectual group (e.g., Steve Sailer, John McGinnis, Charles Murray)—not a politician brave enough to stand with them—who have realized two things: first, that lessons of the new science of evolutionary psychology are largely conservative ones about an adamantine human nature, the natural basis of sex roles, and so on; second, that the knowledge gained from the Human Genome Project and the rise of genetic engineering will throw up some fascinating and contentious political issues in the increasingly near future. John McGinnis outlined the conservative lessons of evolution in the December 22, 1997, issue of this magazine. The main obstacle to their acceptance by other conservatives is that, although they actually lend support to the moral rules derived from the Judeo-Christian tradition, they seem to rob them of divine backing by making them merely adaptive. That is a false criticism in logic, since God's laws and successful evolutionary adaptations could easily coincide. But that may not settle the dispute.

As for the new issues born of genetic research, some have already crossed the political radar screen—notably, the controversy over race and I.Q.—and others will stride into the limelight very soon as it becomes possible for parents not merely to correct obvious genetic effects, but also to improve their children's I.Q., looks, height, etc. Will governments allow this? It will be hard to deny a parent the right to lift the curse of some hereditary disease from his daughter. But since there is no clear dividing line between correcting a defect and improving a feature, then wealthy parents would be able to buy better life-prospects for their offspring. Liberals would then want to use the same technology to "equalize" life-chances.

Major political battles are riding on the back of these scientific discoveries—and the evolutionary conservatives are among the very few people who have thought about them seriously. The Tories will have a lot of hard thinking to do when these issues land unexpectedly on their desks. Maybe they should start practicing now. **NR**

■ TREASON ■

In from the Cold War

The latest from the KGB.

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

COMMUNISM had just gone belly up when early in 1992 Vasili Nikitich Mitrokhin caught a train from Moscow to an unnamed Baltic capital—Riga in Latvia, by the sound of it. There he contacted the CIA. A trusted member of the KGB since 1948, he had been one of its senior archivists for more than a decade, with unrestricted access to its files. You might think that our Vasili would have been recognized, and welcomed, as a defector. He, if anyone, knew the KGB's inside story, and he had the documents to tell it. But the CIA geniuses had no time for Mitrokhin. Over the years, the United States had been penetrated by Soviet espionage and subversion at every level, but the CIA no longer felt the need to know. Only a short while before, the Agency had been predicting that by the year 2000 the Soviet Union would have a larger economy than the United States.

So Mitrokhin walked down the road to the British. For decades, Soviet agents had displayed a professionalism against which the British appeared defenseless. Now, at least, the British delivered Mitrokhin and many trunks of documents back to Britain. Exposure and prosecution of Soviet agents might have been expected. The British, though, were in a quandary. Mitrokhin's files were copies, and so might not satisfy the rules of evidence in court. This allowed the grateful secret services to exercise their one real skill of sweeping as much as possible under the carpet, but they nevertheless came to an unusual deal. Mitrokhin was to collaborate with Christopher Andrew, professor of modern history at Cambridge and a well-known expert on the KGB, to publish what the authorities would permit.

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What Mitrokhin managed to copy and squirrel away reveals only a small part of the KGB effort internationally, but it is enough to stand as an astounding record of Communism, a commemoration of the Soviets as they really were. The archive shows that one or another department of the KGB considered how

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Treason and spying now pass as facts of life about which nothing can be done.

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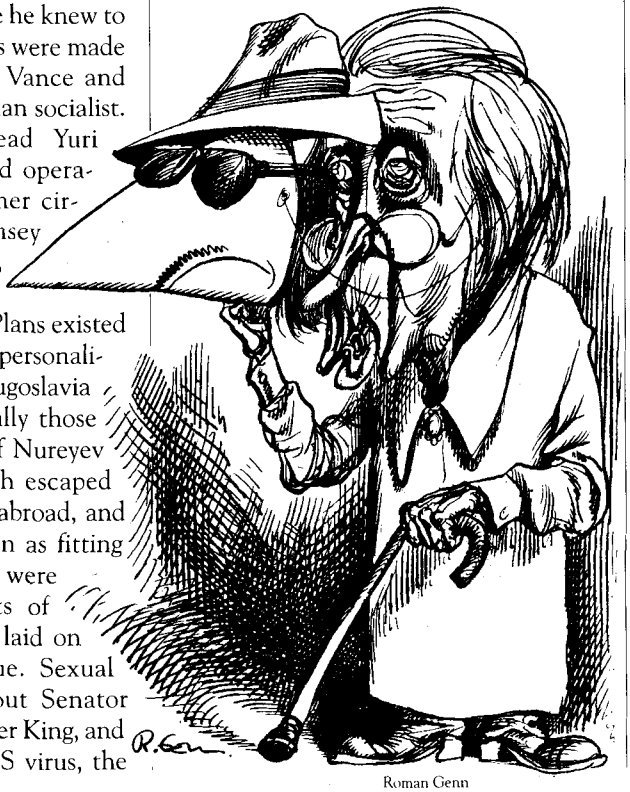
to approach, to monitor, or, at best, to recruit everyone who was anyone politically in the United States and Europe throughout the postwar period. Many of these schemes were ridiculous, of course, but the KGB did succeed in assembling a slew of renegade politicians and parliamentarians, civil servants and academics, and opinion-formers in the media, especially the left-wing press.

One significant success was to compromise Willy Brandt, the West German chancellor, in a way that led to his resignation. British prime minister Harold Wilson earned himself a code name in the files by shooting his mouth off indiscreetly and often to someone he knew to be a KGB agent. Approaches were made to men as varied as Cyrus Vance and Oskar Lafontaine, the German socialist. In 1975 alone, KGB head Yuri Andropov typically ordered operations to penetrate the "inner circles" of George Ball, Ramsey Clark, Averell Harriman, Edward Kennedy, Theodore Sorensen, and others. Plans existed for the murder of a range of personalities, from Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia to Soviet defectors, especially those from the KGB itself. Rudolf Nureyev and Natalia Makarova both escaped the Soviet Union to dance abroad, and their legs were to be broken as fitting punishment. Bomb attacks were arranged in black districts of New York, with the blame laid on the Jewish Defense League. Sexual smears were invented about Senator Scoop Jackson, Martin Luther King, and J. Edgar Hoover. The AIDS virus, the KGB put about, had been "manufactured" in Maryland.

Thanks to the number of agents operating in U.S. defense laboratories, American science effectively became Soviet science. Secret arms caches and radio transmitters, we now learn, were buried in a dozen countries (including America, Turkey, and Israel) for the day when war was openly declared and sabotage behind the lines could begin.

Only weeks ago, researchers happen to have discovered the names of British agents working for the Stasi, the East German secret police. Almost daily, some figures who were always suspected and others who were unknown are being exposed as traitors. It would all be as laughable as a French farce about mistaken identities, except that fundamental questions of security and justice are at stake.

An institutional imagination was at work. The KGB sought and found people who fantasized about the Soviet Union, the huge majority of them deceiving themselves for psychological reasons, living in an illusory dream quite distinct from reality. Like some compulsive seducer, the KGB operated on the principle that you should take every chance, because you could never know your luck, and even clever people were often the fantasizers they wanted.



Roman Genn

Remember "Reds under the beds"? Remember how anyone who worried that Communist agents and spies might be undermining the democracies met the reflex sneer "McCarthyite"? The revelation that Reds had more nearly occupied every room in the house has not yet been enough to prompt anyone to apologize. As for those exposed now in the Mitrokhin-Andrew and Stasi archives, either they are defiant or they prevaricate. Brought to confront the reality that they had voluntarily engaged in a world-wide net of blackmail, sexual entrapment, forgery, and lying, they prefer to retreat into more fantasizing about the Soviet Union and of Communism. The self-deception is altogether a central phenomenon of this age.

Treason and spying now pass as facts of life about which nothing can be done, if the outstanding example of Melita Norwood is anything to go by. Mitrokhin provided the information. The daughter of an émigré Latvian Communist, Norwood became a full Soviet agent in 1937, at the height of Stalin's terror. Her job as a secretary at the British Non-Ferrous Metals Research Association allowed her access to the development of the atomic bomb. By the time anyone thought of vetting her in the early Fifties, she had passed this institute's research on to the Soviets. Only a specialist can determine the damage she did, but the Rosenbergs were executed for comparable treachery. Recently two senior Chinese officers were put to death for passing military secrets to Taiwan. Britain still has capital punishment for treason.

Melita Norwood lives in Bexleyheath, a cozy suburb of south London. Aged 87, and outwardly a dear old grandmother with pink cheeks and a woolly cardigan, she is in a time warp of pure revolutionary illusion. Communism, she says, was about giving "ordinary people food and fares they could afford, good education and a health service"—a reasonable description of surrounding Bexleyheath. "'I loved Lenin. But old Joe, well, he didn't turn out so good. He wasn't a hundred percent." To one journalist who interviewed her, the lack of a sense of guilt at her treason was "spellbinding." It was

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40	$ 123	$ 158	$ 185	$ 238	$ 260
45	$ 190	$ 215	$ 253	$ 330	$ 385
50	$ 253	$ 290	$ 363	$ 490	$ 495
55	$ 365	$ 413	$ 550	$ 835	$ 1,015
60	$ 503	$ 615	$ 845	$ 2,135	$ 2,400
65	$ 775	$ 975	$1,593	$ 3,900	$ 3,900
70	$1,338	$ 1,600	$2,970	$ 7,220	$ 7,220
75	$2,275	$ 4,870	$5,820	$10,370	$12,420

Male Premiums

Age	10 YEAR	15 YEAR	20 YEAR	25 YEAR	30 YEAR
35	$ 123	$ 138	$ 165	$ 223	$ 253
40	$ 148	$ 183	$ 225	$ 288	$ 335
45	$ 225	$ 300	$ 360	$ 450	$ 513
50	$ 338	$ 455	$ 525	$ 743	$ 828
55	$ 500	$ 670	$ 768	$ 1,640	$ 2,330
60	$ 783	$ 990	$1,335	$ 3,630	$ 3,630
65	$1,330	$ 1,650	$2,693	$ 5,250	$ 5,250
70	$2,473	$ 3,175	$4,860	$ 8,790	$ 8,790
75	$4,400	$ 7,443	$9,600	$13,260	$15,030

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her duty to help Russia, she says, and she'd do it all over again. As for Mitrokhin, "As a good pacifist, I could shoot him. What about the effect on the people he is exposing?"

Comically absurd as she may sound, she knows that the secret services have known about her since Mitrokhin defected in 1992. They have not even made contact with her, she boasts. She is daring them to take her to court, safe in the well-founded belief that they will do no such thing. Harassing pink-cheeked grannies isn't nice, is it, and besides it was a long time ago, there isn't a Soviet Union any more, and who cares?

There isn't a Nazi Germany either, but not long ago a law was passed in Britain to prosecute Nazi war crimes retrospectively. The objection that such crimes were committed outside British jurisdiction by people not responsible to British law was summarily overridden. Under this recent law, Anton Gekas, Szymon Serafimowicz, and Andrzej Sawoniuk have been brought to trial, and a great deal of trouble was taken to establish exactly what these three elderly grandfathers did or did not do for the Nazi cause, with life imprisonment duly handed down as a sentence.

Augusto Pinochet arrived in Britain as a guest of the Ministry of Defense a year ago. In 1973 he had staged a military coup against Salvador Allende, a Moscow loyalist, and taken power himself in Chile. Undoubtedly he persecuted Communists, and in return the Soviet Union switched its propaganda machine up to full throttle to establish him as a Nazi-type dictator, a prime hate figure. Stepping down of his own free will, Pinochet left his country stable and democratic. He is now 83, and a grandfather. A self-declared left-wing Spanish magistrate took advantage of Pinochet's visit to serve a writ on him in Britain for crimes committed under his rule in Chile. Any such crimes were outside British (and Spanish) jurisdiction, and those responsible for them are not answerable to British (or Spanish) law. Nevertheless the British government arrested Pinochet and continues to hold him under house arrest while trying to interpret, bend, or invent legal small print to justify its actions. The government appears to be about to extradite Pinochet to Spain.

Anyone categorized as a Nazi, then, whether fairly or unfairly, is brought to account, by whatever legal process can be devised. Proud holder of the Order of the Red Banner, in contrast, Mrs. Norwood enjoys being photographed amid the flowers in her front garden. The Mitrokhin-Andrew revelations are evidently a nine-day wonder, to be shrugged off without any legal or even social repercussions for anyone. The Soviet Union indeed lost the Cold War, but its revenge is a legacy of double standards, with one law for the Left, and another, quite different, for the Right. **NR**

■ **CONGRESS** ■

No School for Scandal

What really goes on at Fort Benning.

ROMAN MARTINEZ

Fort Benning, Ga.

THE Cold War may be over, but antagonisms die hard—including in Congress. In July, Left-Right divisions over military aid to Latin America were resurrected in floor debate over the U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA), an institution that has trained 60,000 Latin American soldiers since its founding in 1946. For years, critics have tried to close what they call the "School of Assassins," citing the list of 500-odd graduates who went on to commit human-rights violations on their home soil. Now, these critics may at last be getting their way.

The opening salvo in the new round of debate was launched by Rep. Joe Moakley, the Massachusetts Democrat. A relentless critic of the SOA, Moakley introduced an amendment that would cut off $2 million in funding for it—almost half its budget—effectively forcing its closure. "Every day this school is open," thundered Moakley on the House floor, "every day it trains people in torture techniques and commando tactics, is a day too many."

The House passed Moakley's amendment by a vote of 230 to 197. But the battle continues, as the Senate has made no move to gut the school's budget. The SOA's fate hinges on the outcome of the House-Senate conference committee, which will meet soon.

With its pastel pink walls and terra-cotta roof, the School of the Americas looks more like a villa than a training ground for dictators and torturers. At the well-maintained facilities at Fort Benning, Ga., Latin American soldiers from 21 different countries study subjects ranging from computer literacy to counter-drug operations to battle tactics. In all, some 50 courses are offered at the school, all of them in Spanish and all—despite the assertions of the school's critics—including mandatory human-rights training: the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention, the Law of Land Warfare, and so on. They even study the My Lai massacre.

Asked about criticisms of the school, Col. Glenn Weidner, an SOA graduate who now serves as its commandant, vehemently denies any allegation that torture is taught here. "That is flatly false," he says. "It's a gross smear on the United States Army."

In an interview, Moakley denies having accused the school of teaching torture, *Congressional Record* to the contrary. Nonetheless, he remains adamant that the SOA should be shut down. "It stands as a symbol of the atrocities committed by its graduates," he says, "whether [the school is] responsible for them or not."

Indeed, it *is* as a symbol that the school remains controversial today. It is a reminder of the Cold War debates over military aid to Latin American governments fighting Soviet- and Cuban-backed guerrilla insurgencies. For years, the school implemented U.S. foreign policy by teaching counter-insurgency tactics to its students. Now, with the containment of Communism no longer

Mr. Martinez, a former NR intern, is a junior at Harvard College and editor of *The Harvard Salient*.

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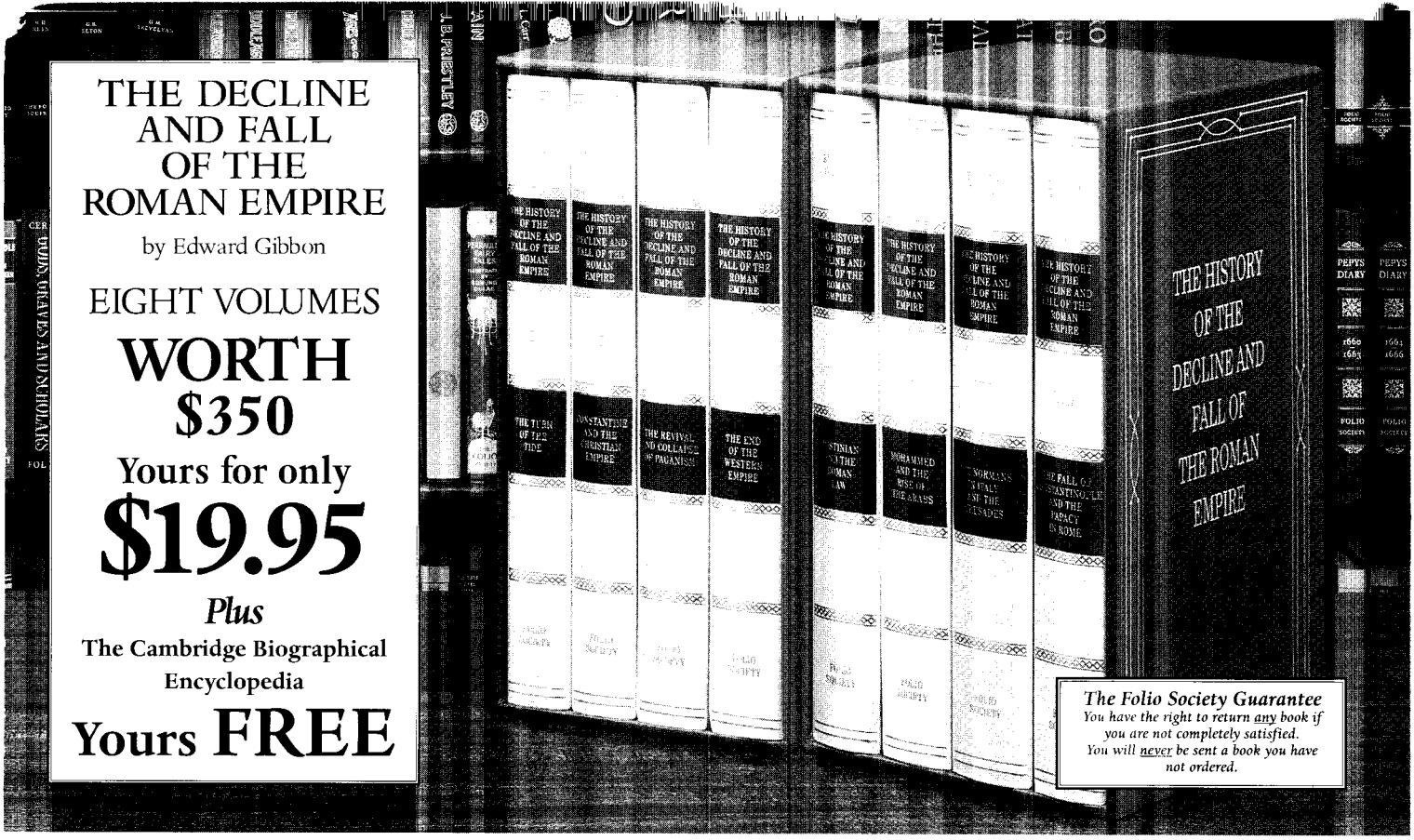
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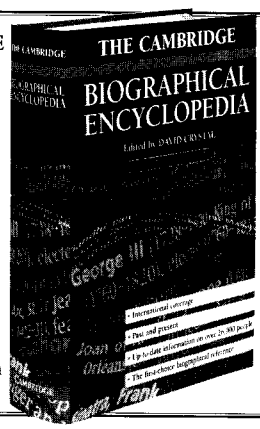

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necessary, the school's focus has changed. Its critics, however, are hardly changed at all.

The leader of the grassroots opposition to the SOA is Father Roy Bourgeois, a 61-year-old Catholic priest who has spent nearly his entire life protesting U.S. foreign policy. Father Roy,

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With the containment of Communism, the school's focus has changed. Its critics, however, are hardly changed at all.

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whose missionary work in Latin America once included patrols with the FMLN, El Salvador's leftist guerrilla movement, denounces what he views as the government's self-interest and callous disregard for the poor in Latin America. He even wants to see Henry Kissinger and Ronald Reagan, among other U.S. officials, prosecuted by an international tribunal for what he calls "their crimes against humanity."

But his bread-and-butter issue, of course, is the School of the Americas. "What this school is about," says Father Roy, whose tan skin, thick biceps, and active blue eyes give him the look of a far younger man, "is control. It's about defending a socio-economic system that keeps the power, land, and guns in the hands of a small elite—all while victimizing the poor."

Situated directly across the street from the entrance to Fort Benning, Father Roy's small home/office is spruced up with the classic adornments of left-wing activism. A poster of Rigoberta Menchu hangs in the kitchen, the *Noam Chomsky Reader* sits prominently on the bookshelf, and pictures of the countless rallies, protests, and vigils he has masterminded are proudly arranged on the walls. Father Roy is meticulously neat, and his organizational skills have no doubt been instrumental in building up the membership of his group, SOA Watch, to over 20,000 people nationwide.

Father Roy and his people harp incessantly on the "torture training" they claim was once standard at the SOA. In fact, the only credible evidence of any wrongdoing on the school's part concerns the use of four outdated Army manuals in two military-intelligence courses offered in the early 1990s. In 1992, a Department of Defense report acknowledged that the manuals contained two dozen passages "inconsistent with U.S. policy"; they included references to blackmail, false imprisonment, physical coercion, and the use of truth serum in interrogation. These so-called "torture manuals" have furnished SOA Watch with a wealth of rhetorical ammunition. What Father Roy and his group neglect to mention, though, is that the manuals were distributed to only 48 students at the school before they were withdrawn.

Since the discovery of the manuals in 1991, the SOA curriculum has been scrutinized in over twelve separate investigations conducted by, among others, the Department of Defense, the General Accounting Office, and even an independent consulting firm. No evidence of further wrongdoing has ever been found. And despite the emphasis his promotional materials place on the manuals, even Father Roy admits that he doesn't believe torture is taught at the school.

Instead, he and his followers pursue a second line of attack, which consists of blaming the school for the misbehavior of its graduates. For example, an SOA Watch fact sheet asserts that "hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, massacred, and forced into refuge by those trained at the school." The group's website lists over 500 SOA graduates implicated in human-rights abuses—including such villains as Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega and 19 Salvadoran soldiers accused of murdering six Jesuit priests in 1989.

In many cases, it's unclear exactly how SOA training affected later behavior. Consider the example of Roberto d'Aubuisson, the Salvadoran death-squad leader who is often cited by the school's opponents. D'Aubuisson did indeed attend the School of the Americas, in 1980—but only for a six-week-long course in radio maintenance and repair. Blaming the school for d'Aubuisson's later misdeeds makes about as much sense as blaming Stalin's seminary instructors for the Gulag Archipelago.

In recent years the school's curriculum has shifted to reflect the rapid democratization of Latin America. As civil wars in the region have subsided, counter-insurgency has been de-emphasized in favor of courses in democratic sustainment, de-mining, and counter-narcotics. "What we're doing," says Col. Weidner, "is giving these soldiers exposure to American ideals and proper civil-military relations." SOA courses include more hours of human-rights instruction than those at any other U.S. Army training school.

But for the SOA's opponents, the real issue goes way beyond the school itself. As Father Roy puts it, "This school is only one small part of a foreign policy that's bringing shame on our country." Never mind, of course, that the spread of peace and democracy to Latin America makes U.S. policy look a lot more successful than Father Roy would care to admit. Yet even without any credible evidence of wrongdoing by the school, the opposition marches on.

Nearly a decade after the end of the Cold War, it's nice to see the radical Left has finally accepted the policy of containment. Too bad what they seek to contain is the spread of American influence and values to the militaries of Latin America. **NR**

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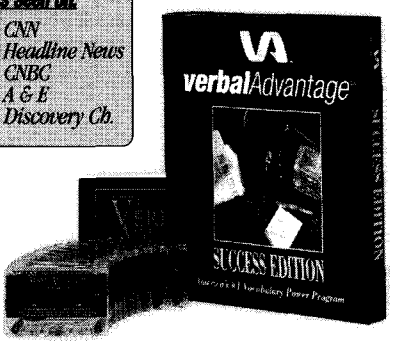

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■ PUBLIC POLICY ■

Health Insurance? Forget It

Where Washington State went wrong.

DAVID KLINGHOFFER

Seattle, Wa.

HILLARY Clinton and Al Gore, survivors of Bill Clinton's failed attempt to socialize medicine six years ago, still haven't given up on the idea of state-backed universal health insurance. Mrs. Clinton promises to make it an issue in her senatorial campaign. In his presidential bid, Gore proposes giving all children a government guarantee of health-care access and argues for a "Patient's Bill of Rights" granting further new rights to adults, including the right to see a shrink at your insurer's expense.

But in this, as in so many other things, denizens of "the other Washington"—as locals here call the nation's capital—live in a kind of vacuum-sealed terrarium separated from the reality of most Americans' lives. In the Washington that sits on the edge of the Pacific Ocean, socialism in the doctor's office has run up against a barrier as formidable as the Pacific itself. Call it "reality." This correspondent happens to have found that out the hard way.

I moved to Seattle recently with a view to making a go of it as a freelance writer. The morning after I pulled into town, I opened the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* to discover that I was in deep trouble. I'm someone with an unusually strong interest in staying healthy—okay, okay, I'm a hypochrondriac—so in my mind keeping within easy contact of expert medical attention is second only to easy access to food and water. Medical attention means medical insurance. And as of that very day, in Seattle and most of the rest of Washington State, insurance carriers were no longer going to be writing new policies for self-employed individuals—like me. Employers can still buy group insurance, but if you're, say, an entrepreneur or a writer on your own and without insurance, you're out of luck.

Any number of hypochondriacal symptoms presented themselves to me as I read through the news story. Is that a pain I feel in my back? Head? Arm? Stomach area?

Actually, a self-employed person can buy insurance if he's desperate enough. As an emergency measure, insurance commissioner Deborah Senn has opened the state's so-called high-risk pool to all comers. This means we can buy the kind of insurance that was designed for people so sick they can't get insurance any other way, the kind that's 50 percent costlier than if you got your insurance through an employer. Thanks! So far 18 people have signed up.

What happened to Washington State, where—I thought before leaving Manhattan—the living's supposed to be so easy, not to mention healthy?

Ideologically speaking, the place has a split personality. Evangelical Christians are startlingly prominent. At your nearby, heavily trafficked Starbucks, don't be surprised to see a twentysomething white guy in grunge attire sitting next to you and, of all things, intently studying the Bible. Even in suburban, upscale Mercer Island, where I live—the socio-economic equivalent of New York's Westchester County—church parking lots are jammed on Sundays.

Then again, Washington also has a weakness for left-secularism, often in some wacky forms. The lower portion of each afternoon's *Seattle Times* front page is apparently reserved for covering this other half of the region's culture. The big story in this vein last week was a fire-breathing—literally—post-op transsexual who climbed to the top of a utility tower and snarled traffic for hours by shaking his bared breasts and blowing and igniting geysers of liquid propane from his mouth, till cops coaxed him down. In New York, they would have just shot him. His stated purpose: to protest laws against women showing their naked bosoms in public.

In 1993, at the same time the White House was promoting Hillary's plan, Christian Washington State snoozed as radical Washington State passed the Washington Health Services Act, ClintonCare in miniature. Nine separate health bureaucracies bloomed. An insurance commisionership was inaugurated and Deborah Senn, a regulatory attorney with no health-care experience, elected to the job. The legislation promised reforms in which everybody would be required to buy insurance from one of several government-controlled health plans. Choice in health coverage would be severely limited.

Republicans succeeded in unraveling the Act's most egregious features, but one reform that survived has contributed to the downfall of the individual insurance market here. Under this provision, nobody can be turned away, and no pre-existing condition can be excluded. Let's say that an AIDS-infect-

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If you're an entrepreneur or a writer on your own and without insurance, you're out of luck.

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ed resident of another state is looking for a more generous health plan. He moves to Seattle. Any health insurer selling policies in King County is obliged to sell him insurance just as it would to somebody in perfect health. Within 90 days, the insurance carrier must begin covering the AIDS patient for all his medical needs and desires.

Alarming losses began to be reported in the individual insurance market: $15.5 million in one year at Blue Cross, $7 million at Pierce County Medical, and so on. Carriers predictably tried to make up for the losses by raising premiums—in a single year, in the case of Pierce County Medical, by as much as 34 percent.

By 1995, companies had begun reaching a decision that they could no longer do individual-insurance business here. Estimates vary, but between 30 and 40 carriers have ceased writing individual policies in Washington State. In 31 of 39

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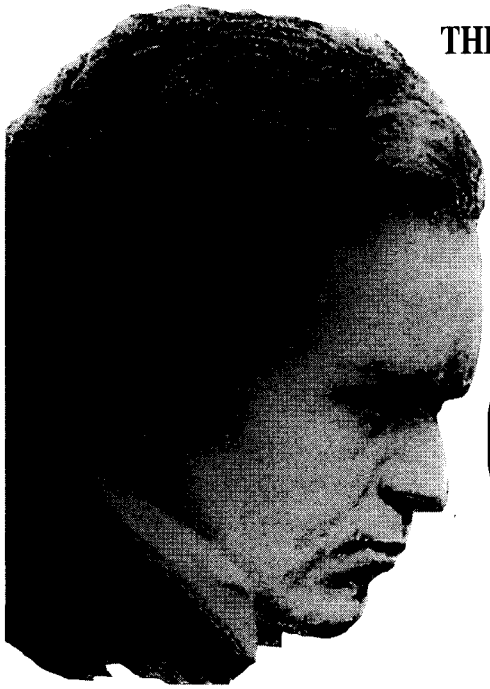

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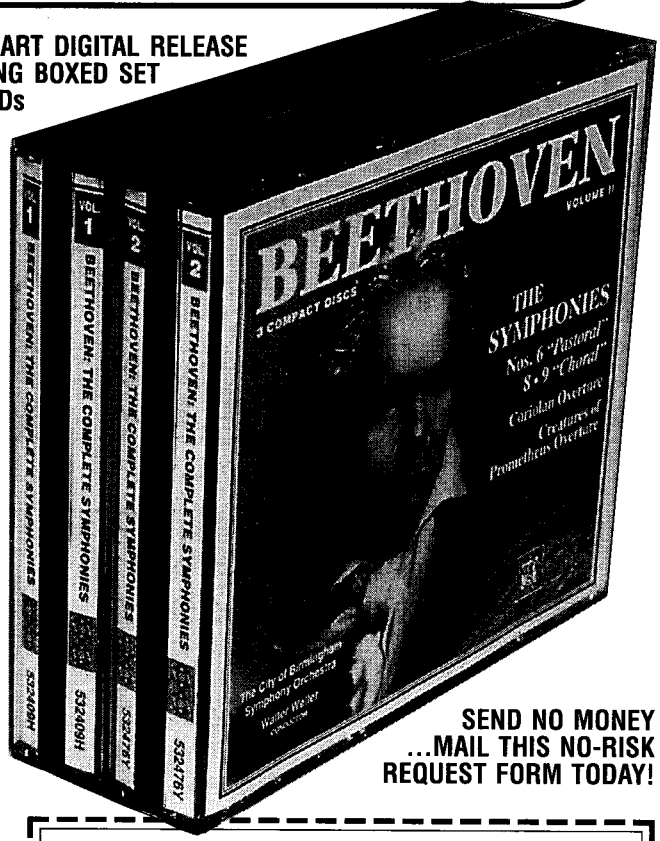

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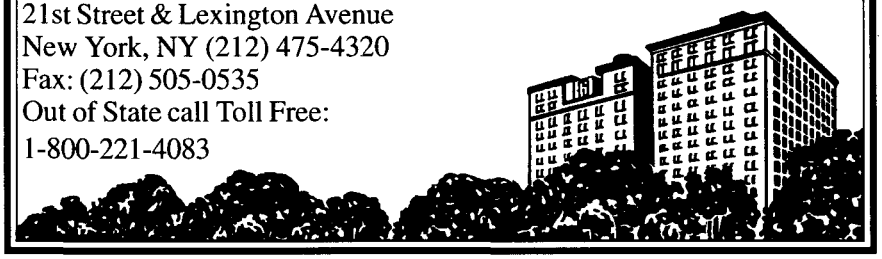

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Paul Guppy, of the Washington Institute Foundation, a free-market-oriented think tank, takes the commonsensical view that "the more government restricts freedom in the marketplace, the harder it becomes to stay in business and offer your product at competitive prices. . . . Deborah Senn's opinion is that a *little bit* of socialism doesn't work, but if you put the whole socialist straitjacket on like they've done in Canada, then it will work."

That's pretty much what she does say. Queried as to what lessons insurance chaos in her state may have for would-be reformers like Hillary Clinton, an irritable Commissioner Senn replies, "You'd have to ask her." The commissioner's own appetite for insurance reform remains undiminished. "We didn't have reform, we had half reform. The lesson that everyone should have learned is that you can't take a piecemeal approach." The party to blame is not the reformers, Senn insists: "This is very much a stand-off created by the carriers." She blames, for instance, Blue Cross for spending too much money on administrative costs and other carriers for selling insurance to larger employers for too little.

Cleverly, Senn avoids falling into the liberal trap of calling health care a "right." Instead she says that reform of the kind envisioned in 1993, and presumably still glittering in the mind of Mrs. Clinton, is ultimately about "finding a way to be really smart with our health-care dollars. It's very pragmatic. We're all going to pay for it as a society, one way or another." In the absence of guaranteed access to health care, individuals will wait till they're good and sick before seeking out a doctor, then end up in expensive emergency-room care.

Anyway, she thinks, the real crisis isn't with the individual insurance market at all, but with the group market. Her office recently published a "white paper" asserting that carriers lost $43.8 million on group policies in 1997, but only $11.9 million on individuals. If so, it remains deeply mysterious that insurers continue to sell group policies as they always did, while evacuating the individual market almost en masse.

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Clearly, even a little bit of socialism is a very bad thing. What will Al Gore and Hillary Clinton, the latter currently expressing interest in gradual rather than dramatic insurance reform, make of all this should either attain higher office? To paraphrase Deborah Senn, you'd have to ask them.

Meanwhile, about the pain in my stomach area . . . **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH** ■

Stonehenge or Septic Tank?

An American dilemma.

JOHN J. MILLER

Miami

On a September day last year, two archaeologists and a surveyor stared into a narrow 12-foot trench they had just dug and argued about what they were looking at. The archaeologists weren't sure, but the surveyor, T. L. Riggs, had no doubt. "That's Stonehenge in reverse," he said, pointing to four large holes cut into the exposed limestone bedrock. The two Dade County archaeologists, Robert Carr and John Ricisak, just rolled their eyes. They had worked with Riggs for years and knew him to be a reliable surveyor. They also knew that Riggs, a part-time Bigfoot-hunter, was given to flights of fancy. This appeared to be one of them.

To Riggs, however, it was a simple matter of geometry. He measured the arc of the four holes in the trench and calculated their center point at about 19 feet away in an area the diggers had not touched. Using a tape measure, he walked the perimeter of the circle he imagined to lie beneath the unexcavated dirt and spray-painted its circumference on the ground. Carr and Ricisak went to work with their shovels. To their surprise, Riggs was right. About two dozen holes had been cut into the bedrock, forming a circle on the south bank of the Miami River where it empties into Biscayne Bay. The circle—now popularly known as the Miami Circle—had a diameter of 37 feet. They had never seen or heard of anything like it. Neither had anyone else.

It may now cost Florida taxpayers up to $50 million to save it. Although most archaeologists believe the circle is evidence of a 2,000-year-old Tequesta Indian building, a bizarre preservationist movement spouting wilder theories has sprung up and drawn international attention. The first *Miami Herald* story on the circle improbably suggested that the Maya had built it. Others have called it a remnant of Atlantis, or even a corner of the Bermuda Triangle. New Age types regularly hold vigils nearby and have decorated the fence enclosing the circle with peace signs, flags of the world, and Christmas ornaments. Their

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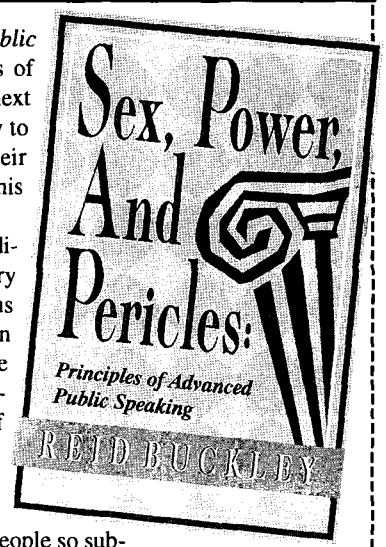

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efforts led Dade County to file an eminent-domain suit, and in October a jury will slap a price tag on the 2.2-acre lot. The county will then have 20 days to come up with the cash before the property reverts back to the developer, who wants to build a twin-tower apartment complex on the site. Local officials are scrambling to find money, and Gov. Jeb Bush has pledged several million dollars in state funds to save the circle.

There's only one problem: The Miami Circle may simply be the remains of an old septic tank.

That's the theory recently put forward by Jerald T. Milanich, an archaeologist at the Florida Museum of Natural History in Gainesville. "When I was at the site this spring, I was immediately skeptical," says Milanich. There is, in fact, a septic tank buried in the limestone just inside the circle's southern rim. It was put there in the 1950s to serve a small apartment building razed last year to make room for the new development. "Those holes look like they could be part of an overflow drain," says Milanich. "I've been in this business too long not to have a suspicious mind."

This is clearly a minority opinion, but it must be taken seriously—especially when tens of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake. "Jerry is *the* expert on Florida archaeology," says Vin Steponaitis, a University of North Carolina archaeologist and past president of the Society for American Archaeology. And if Milanich is correct, Dade County's expected purchase of the site would make the Pentagon's $600 hammers look like a bargain.

Unfortunately, a judge placed the circle off-limits right after the county filed its suit in February. The developer, Michael Baumann, is still technically the owner, and he has not allowed any visitors. The small plot of land is full of weeds and surrounded by a chain-link fence. An armed guard sits outside the gate round the clock. It's possible to look down on the site from the top of a hotel parking deck or a drawbridge, but the circle itself was covered with protective fabric and gravel in August. The holes can't be seen.

Baumann purchased the lot for $8 million and says he has put nearly $7 million into it since then. He wants the county to pay him $50 million in compensation for his direct costs as well as lost profits. In September, a pair of county appraisers suggested that the property's real value is somewhere between $15 and $17 million.

Paying even a fraction of this sum to preserve an old septic tank, of course, can instantly turn a city into a global laughingstock. Politicians lose their jobs over this sort of thing. Yet the scientists who have spent the most time on the site dismiss Milanich's claims. "There's not one shred of evidence that the circle is from a septic tank," says Ricisak, who studied old building plans to rule out the septic-tank idea. He also notes that no modern artifacts were found in the holes or the midden deposits covering them. The deposits themselves were carbon-dated to roughly A.D. 100. Moreover, the limestone inside the holes is coated with a thin crust formed by a chemical reaction that takes hundreds of years to occur. John Coker, a local plumber with 30 years of experience, called the septic tank's position inside the circle "totally coincidental." Riggs is more blunt: "You know what goes into septic tanks, don't you? That's what I think of the septic-tank theory."

The Miami Circle could make the Pentagon's $600 hammers look like a bargain.

But Milanich is stubborn in his views, and his hypothesis can be tested rather easily. The Miami Circle site was once home to six apartment buildings, and each one had two septic tanks. The buildings were hooked up to the city sewer system in 1970, but the septic tanks were left in place. They're still there. "We could dig up a few of them and see if they have holes surrounding them, too," says James Miller, Florida's state archaeologist.

As things stand, however, that won't happen. The county and the state are getting ready to spend their money on a hope rather than a certainty. When Jeb Bush advocated buying the circle, he said, "It's appropriate to really make sure that we . . . use whatever means we have to determine" whether "this site has the kind of historical significance that it appears to." Most archaeologists are convinced this has been done. The site is clearly ancient and very significant, they say, and it ought to be rescued from the bulldozers. They make a good case—but Milanich believes that about $50,000 in additional study would solve any remaining questions concerning the circle's authenticity. The odd thing is that the county and state are ready to pay millions to save the circle, but a comparatively cheap piece of fieldwork is beyond their reach.

Even if all doubts are removed, the fight over the Miami Circle may ultimately do more harm than good to the cause of archaeology. "I've had doors slammed in my face all summer by landowners who don't want me poking around their property," says Judith Bense, director of the Archeology Institute at the University of West Florida in Pensacola. "They've heard about the Miami Circle, and they're worried that finding an archaeological site on their land would be like finding an endangered species—their property would no longer be their own."

Many archaeologists even wonder whether preserving the circle is the best use of public money. "It could go a lot further saving several other sites around the country," says Mark Michel, head of the Archaeological Conservancy, a national group based in Albuquerque, N.M. "The money might even be better spent on a few other locations in Florida."

Of course, the money isn't available for these other purposes, and won't be. It's the Miami Circle or nothing, and "Just buy it" seems to be a popular sentiment. There's also a strong sense among many in Miami that the last thing the crowded downtown area needs is another residential high-rise; and there is a palpable hope that the circle will turn out to be something truly special, like a New World Stonehenge.

One thing is certain. As Dade County commissioner Katy Sorenson told Gov. Bush and his cabinet, "Tequesta, by the way, when mispronounced *te cuesta*, means 'It'll cost you.'" **NR**

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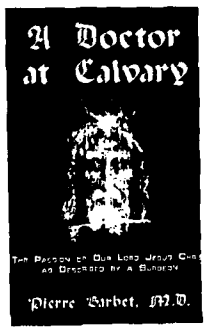

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■ COVER STORY ■

A Conservative No More

The tribal politics of Pat Buchanan.

RAMESH PONNURU

PATRICK J. BUCHANAN'S impending departure from the Republican party is attracting interest as the only surprise of the political season. The real surprise is that it took him so long. It has been clear for some time that Buchanan's ideological wanderings have taken him far from the heartland of the Republican party and the conservative movement. As early as 1992, William McGurn was warning in these pages that while Buchanan described his presidential campaign as a "theological debate," "many a voice that starts off promising reformation finds itself swept along into schism."

Buchanan's intellectual fellow travelers certainly foresaw the possibility of such a schism; indeed, they egged it on. In a March 1996 column, Samuel Francis wrote that he had been telling Buchanan for years that his "refusal to break even more definitely with a more conventional conservative identity and with the Republican Party . . . is a serious error." Buchanan's identification as a Republican and a conservative, Francis continued, "dilutes and deflects the radicalism of the message."

That message has been diluted as well by some of Buchanan's conservative fans. They persist in seeing him as a comrade-in-arms. They insult him by pretending that his apparent heterodoxies aren't meant seriously. Some of them still deny even that he is a protectionist. He is merely a "fair trader," they say, though his book *The Great Betrayal* advocates that America 1) destroy the institutions that have promoted free trade since World War II; 2) impose across-the-board 15 percent tariffs on products from every country on earth, with the possible exception of Canada; and 3) impose heavy additional tariffs on poor countries.

Buchanan's protectionism, like his near-isolationism, might not matter were it a mere idiosyncrasy. Both positions have conservative pedigrees. His promise to run both a trade surplus and an investment surplus—which is impossible as a matter of simple math, not just theory—might be passed off as a quaint example of the literary intellectual's indifference to economics. (Early in his poignant memoir, *Right from the Beginning*, Buchanan remarks that he agrees with the wit who said that "voodoo economics" is a redundancy.) His view that Hitler and Stalin should have been left alone to duke it out might be a stimulating provocation.

But Buchanan's views on trade and foreign policy have become central to his politics; it's hard to dismiss them as incidental to Buchananism, now that he has written a book on each and apparently decided to bolt the Republican party because of them. He talks more about these views than he does about immigration control, where he would have a better case. Moreover, as Buchanan's conservative critics predicted, his shift on trade has led him inexorably to the left on domestic matters.

In *The Great Betrayal*, Buchanan compares free markets to the law of the jungle and writes, "Better the occasional sins of a government acting out of the spirit of charity than the constant omissions of a government frozen in the ice of its own indifference." Conservatives who grind their teeth every time George W. Bush uses his favorite adjective should remember

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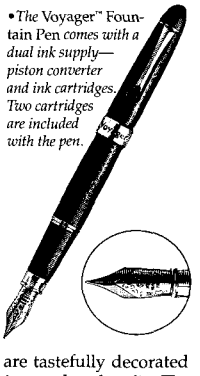

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that Buchanan was the very first compassionate conservative—"I may charge him with plagiarism," he says. Buchanan has been slow to grasp the full implications of his new political stance. He still, for instance, opposes increasing the minimum wage. But his "conservatism of the heart" has moved him to favor higher unemployment benefits, to support a cap on executive pay, and to condemn Republicans' brave efforts in 1995 to curb the growth of Medicare.

Buchanan almost never talks about cutting government any more, certainly not about ending specific programs or programs that benefit the middle class. It is true that most Republicans these days share this reticence. But only Buchanan says that advocates of the flat tax have spent too much time with "the boys down at the yacht basin." Not even liberal Democrats bash corporations with his gusto, deploring

In pursuit of a national ticket, Buchanan cares more about trade and foreign policy than he does about abortion.

as he does their greed, questioning their loyalty, and second-guessing their decisions. (For all the anti-corporate rhetoric, of course, a Buchananite economic policy would in practice involve an alliance between Big Government, Big Business, and Big Labor—as every country that has tried to implement such a policy has found out.)

THE LAST NIXONIAN

This is not the conservatism of Ronald Reagan, or Barry Goldwater, or William F. Buckley Jr. It is not even, as is so often incorrectly said, a revival of Robert Taft Republicanism: Taft didn't play to the union halls, and Medicare would have horrified him. Every writer creates his own precursors, wrote Borges, and Buchanan seems to have taken the remark too literally: He likes to imagine that his views are the same as those of the Founders, as though Hamilton's nuanced and moderate protectionism were the same as his blunderbuss kind. No, his politics are a new phenomenon.

In his book *Revolution from the Middle*, Francis argues that Buchananism, unlike conventional conservatism, has a social base: the "Middle American Radicals" (MARs), lower-middle-class whites who feel culturally and economically dispossessed. For these people, the trouble with the federal government is not that it is too big but that it is run by elites who are disloyal to them. Writes Francis: "Only Buchanan managed to capture the strange synthesis of right and left that characterizes the political beliefs of MARs—their combination of culturally conservative moral and social beliefs with support for economically liberal policies such as Medicare, Social Security, unemployment benefits, and economic nationalism and protectionism."

Conservatives tend to place a lot of emphasis, maybe too much, on the idea that ideas have consequences. They hoist their ideas up the flagpole and then see who salutes. Buchananism puts its idealized social base first, and lets it drive everything else. For Buchanan, loyalty to the tribe trumps any idea. On this point at least, Buchanan may justly claim not to have changed his views. His recent, tentative proposal that elite universities institute quotas for Italian-Americans builds on an idea first expressed in his 1975 book *Conservative Votes, Liberal Victories*. Buchananism is a form of identity politics for white people—and becomes more worrisome as it is married to collectivism.

If Buchananism is a novelty as ideology, it does have an antecedent as political strategy. Buchanan's mentor, Richard Nixon, succeeded in winning over the same constituency—it was then known as the (George) Wallace vote—by exploiting its cultural grievances while tacking left on the size and role of government. Buchanan wants to recreate Nixon's coalition of 1972. Just as Nixon got AFL-CIO president George Meany not to oppose him, so Buchanan is reportedly courting Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa Jr. to be his running mate. But the Nixon coalition was not a conservative coalition, as Nixon's policies amply proved.

Wage and price controls, the EPA, quotas, arms control—these just begin the list of Nixon's statist-liberal policies. Lyndon Johnson created the Great Society, but Richard Nixon funded it. M. Stanton Evans, the conservative journalist, cracked at the time that he had only two objections to the Nixon administration: its foreign policy and its domestic policy. Watergate, he said, was the only thing Nixon had done that he liked. Now that the passions of Watergate have receded, observers of all political persuasions are coming to recognize that Nixon achieved more for liberalism than any of his successors.

It must have become increasingly clear to Buchanan that the Nixon coalition could no longer be built from within the GOP. The exit polls from the Republican primaries of 1996 suggest that he would have been better off running as a Reaganite. Buchanan barely won the self-described "very conservative" vote and got crushed among voters who care primarily about taxes, i.e., economic conservatives; he didn't get any more independents and Democrats to vote for him in the primaries than Bob Dole did. Voters who cared about trade were heavily against Buchanan on the west coast, and leaned toward him only slightly elsewhere.

IN THE BEGINNING, ABORTION

What actually motivated the Buchanan brigades to pick up their pitchforks was, above all, their opposition to abortion. Buchanan won the 1996 New Hampshire primary because 64 percent of those voters whose top issue was abortion rallied to him. These pro-lifers must now be astonished to learn that Buchanan, in pursuit of a national ticket and $12.6 million in federal matching funds, cares more about trade and foreign policy than he does about abortion. He is apparently willing to join a pro-choice party and to risk helping the Democrats appoint two or three more Supreme Court justices in a post-Clinton administration.

But even Christian conservatives, many of whom are also economic conservatives, have deserted him. Buchanan's vote peaked his first time out: He has never equaled his showing in February 1992, when he won 37 percent of the vote in the New Hampshire primary. There were, of course, non-ideo-

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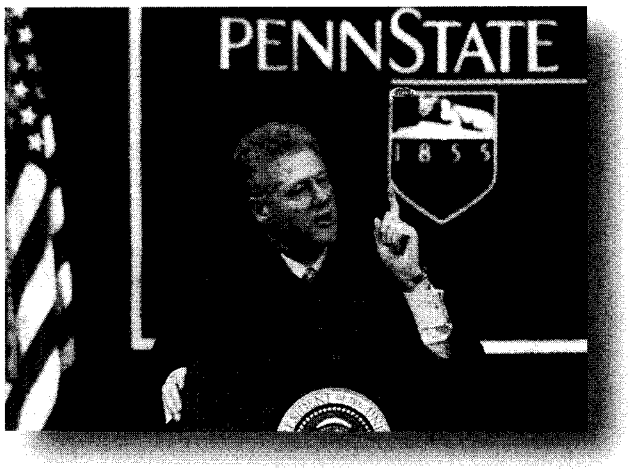

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logical reasons for Buchanan's subsequent burnouts. To begin with, he was surprisingly lackadaisical about politics for someone who wants to reshape it. After losing in 1996, Buchanan went back to CNN; Steve Forbes, by contrast, never left the hustings. Gary Bauer has raised money for other candidates; Buchanan has done nothing to nurture a like-minded cadre in Congress. Buchanan's showing in the Iowa straw poll in August—Bauer placed higher—underlined the point that he has no future in the Republican party. The most recent poll shows him with the backing of only 3 percent of Republican voters, and he has the support of no acknowledged conservative figure.

NOWHERE MAN

Does he have a future outside the GOP? It's going to be difficult to create such a coalition as Buchanan envisions. The world has changed since the Nixon administration: The workers he wants to court are now more likely to be watching the stock market than to be joining a strike. The Reform party poses challenges of its own. Its lack of ideology and structure make it vulnerable to a Buchanan takeover—he's more organized than it is—but these same qualities would make it hard for him to run an ideological campaign.

There is also the matter of Buchanan's vestigial moral conservatism. Within one week, Buchanan could be found pledging both to keep fighting for the unborn and to downplay such issues in order to keep secular-minded Reform voters with him. As Francis, always a more clear-headed theorist of Buchananism than Buchanan himself, puts it: "Religion is not the most effective political and ideological vehicle for expressing and publicly vindicating the frustrations that animate the Middle American Revolution because the Christianity of the right simply doesn't encompass very many Middle American interests." This is quite correct in theory: A mass movement based on anger and resentment, let alone the racial themes that animate Francis, is not likely to be big on the brotherhood of man. But since Christian conservatives rather than Middle American Radicals have in fact made up Buchanan's base, the candidate seems to be hunting where the ducks aren't.

Pat Buchanan by Roman Genn

One presumes that Buchanan actually believes that his peasants will be able to storm the White House, even if they have not been able to dislodge the barons and baronesses of the GOP. Again, the reality will be different: His campaign will simply demonstrate further the impossibility of his politics in modern America. This is true almost regardless of the final tally. If the Democrats win because of his presence in the race, Republicans may feel they must move in his direction. But any such Republican party would likely be a rump party: Like George McGovern, Buchanan would have ascended to the leadership of a minority party by ejecting a constituency of a majority party—in this case, economic conservatives. He would remake the Right at the cost of letting the Left remake the country. If, on the other hand, the Republicans win with a healthy majority, Buchanan will be marginalized.

It would be folly to try to predict how well Buchanan would do in a general election. Can his belief that Americans are decadent for wanting to be able to buy fruit out of season withstand political scrutiny? How many voters will be moved by his terrific rhetorical talents? Will he actually get the Reform nomination at all? Whether Buchanan deserves any support from conservatives—that should be an easier question.

Conservatism is a house with many mansions. But for more than four decades, whatever their philosophical first principles, conservatives have agreed on a basic program: an anti-totalitarian foreign policy, at once nationalist and internationalist; free markets and limited government at home; and moral traditionalism. Buchanan is at war with the first two planks of this platform, and he is no longer reliable even on the moral issues, yielding as he has to other priorities. Where conservatives attribute our burgeoning underclass to moral breakdown, he blames capitalism. He embraces relativism abroad: Totalitarian, nationalist dictatorships are a natural outgrowth of Arab culture. And he is willing to risk a permanently pro-abortion Supreme Court on a lark.

During the '80s, conservatives used to groan every time Kevin Phillips was quoted as a "conservative" saying something snippy about Ronald Reagan. They joked that he had acquired a new first name, "Even," as in, "Even Kevin Phillips opposes these tax cuts." Like Buchanan, Phillips is an old Nixon hand who decided at some point that exploiting cultural resentments and seeing various elites get their comeuppance mattered more than expanding freedom. The difference is that letting Buchanan continue to describe himself as a conservative would be not just irritating but destructive. He is in no important sense a conservative any more. Let his failure be his alone. **NR**

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It is time to admit the War on Drugs has failed.

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- **Evaluate current drug enforcement spending to ensure it is effective and provide sufficient funding for alternatives to incarceration for non-violent, low-level drug offenders.**
- **Examine the racially disproportionate impact of current drug policy as well as its adverse effects on women, especially poor women and their families.**
- **Hold international and domestic drug law enforcement funding at current levels until they prove their effectiveness. Law enforcement has had massive funding increases over the last two decades without any proof of success.**
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Funding must be shifted away from interdiction and incarceration - towards treatment and prevention.

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The Agony of East Timor

A report from Jakarta.

DAVID SHUKMAN

Jakarta

DRIVE, if you can, through the choking streets of this capital, past the skyscrapers of the business district, the presidential palace, and the diplomatic suburbs, and eventually you approach the seat of real power in Indonesia. You pass down a surprisingly narrow lane, lined with makeshift food stalls and muddy drains—the typical backdrop for the lives of most of this country's 200 million people—and ahead lies a grandiose entrance to another world, the military world. This is Cilangkap, headquarters of the Indonesian armed forces, and many Indonesians fall silent at the mention of its name.

On my visit, I was escorted past security and down a manicured highway that stretched for at least a mile. Palm trees and whitewashed paving stones were kept trim by gangs of laborers toiling in the tropical heat. Fountains played in extravagant patterns. Huge buildings—one each for the army, navy, and air force—had blunt totalitarian facades, an ugly mix of Mussolini and Ceausescu, a vision of strength and order and control. This is how Indonesia's generals like to live, how they would like to run their country. Since independence, they have seen themselves as the guarantors of Indonesian nationhood, and their iron hand has kept the 17,000 islands and 300 languages under one flag.

AP Photo/Maya Vidon, Pool

An Australian soldier aims his rifle at an alleged militiaman arrested at the entrance of the Dili airport in East Timor.

The Indonesian military are used to wielding power. The first president was a general, Sukarno. So was the second, Suharto, who seized control by stealth rather than violence and stayed at the top for three decades. Suharto ensured his place through brutality, patronage, and a determined effort to keep his fellow generals sweet with shiny new weapons and no nonsense about democracy. It was a system that made a lot of people extremely rich. It also provided an outlet for the most ardent nationalism. The outside world welcomed the stability.

Now, however, all that may be changing, and East Timor is one of the causes.

Cilangkap's annual promotion ceremony was about to begin. Some 40 senior officers lined up in a huge air-conditioned hall amid back-slapping and bellows of laughter which echoed off the black marble. Self-confidence hung in the air. You never would have guessed that a human tragedy was unfolding in a far corner of their country and that the colleagues and subordinates of these very men were responsible. A silence fell. General Wiranto arrived, bearing four gleaming stars on his shoulder-boards and the poised step of a man who runs the most powerful political force in the world's fourth most populous nation. He gave a brief speech and led a procession of handshakes. Among those promoted was the armed forces' spokesman. No sense here that the Indonesian military might have an image problem.

General Wiranto stopped to talk to local journalists, and I noticed that few dared ask him any questions. Only in the last year or so have the media felt the courage to tackle politicians; no one's so brave with the military. I barged in, as one does in a democracy, and asked what almost every world leader was demanding: What action was he taking to save the people of East Timor from intimidation, rape, murder, and forced deportation? A bloodbath was under way there. Militia gangs, armed thugs, fighting to keep East Timor part of Indonesia, were on the rampage after a landslide referendum vote for independence, and there was mounting evidence that the Indonesian armed forces were behind it.

The general spun round to face me and my overly loud question. East Timor was a raw nerve.

"We are trying to stop the violence. We need strong forces." And with that dismissive answer, he turned his back on me.

East Timor is blessed with great beauty but is cursed as a possession. It was an unloved colony of Portugal's and was abandoned suddenly in 1975. Later that year, Indonesia, which had already inherited the western half of Timor island from the Dutch, marched in and seized the rest. East Timor was declared to be an Indonesian province. The United

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Nations protested the invasion, but the Indonesians stayed, and for the next 24 years they waged a dirty war against any East Timorese who demanded independence. The international community didn't really care. Indonesia was a good customer for Western weapons, and General Suharto was seen as a stalwart opponent of Communism. It didn't make geopolitical sense to rock the boat: There was the Cold War to fight, and Jakarta was on the right side.

But East Timor's fate was bound up with Indonesia's. General Suharto was ousted from power in 1997. A popular uprising triggered by the Asian economic crisis had exposed the breathtaking corruption of the Suharto family and forced an end to his dictatorship. His final act was to appoint a successor. B. J. Habibie, a technocrat and a diminutive, nervous figure, became Indonesia's first civilian leader since independence. The military were never going to be happy with him and he would never look comfortable with them. Habibie's jerky, flapping attempt at a salute quickly attracted scorn. In army headquarters, the obligatory official photograph has Habibie's title of President of the Republic typed on a scrap of paper that has been hurriedly stuck to the bottom of the frame—as if it were not worth getting a label done properly.

■

The generals were appalled. Two decades of fighting to crush East Timor's aspirations for independence were now in vain.

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The generals' scorn turned to bitterness, even hatred, when Habibie made a fateful decision. This is a man who has always had a vision of Indonesia as a hi-tech, Internet-friendly place, and he saw that the statutory protests about human-rights abuses in East Timor that were uttered, sincerely or not, like a mantra at every international forum, were an obstacle to truly joining the family of modern nations. He was right in that. But he failed to think through the consequences of what he was going to do.

In response to pressure from Australia, which sensed that a change in policy might now be conceivable, Habibie announced without warning a plan to give East Timor special autonomy. So far, so good. But then the real bombshell dropped, last May. Habibie, notorious for being erratic, even careless, went much farther than anyone expected. He declared that within three months there would be a referendum in East Timor. Voters would be asked if they wanted autonomy or independence. In Indonesian terms, it was like the Berlin Wall being opened.

The generals were appalled. Two decades of fighting to crush East Timor's aspirations for independence were now in vain. Other rebellious regions would be encouraged to break away too, and Indonesia could fall apart. Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union were models not to follow. The United Nations, fearful of chaos in East Timor, warned that more time was needed before the vote, that three months wasn't enough to prepare an electorate unfamiliar with democracy and to establish an atmosphere for free and fair polling in a territory where for so long state-sponsored intimidation had been the norm. Even pro-independence campaigners, including the East Timorese leader Xanana Gusmao, who was released from house arrest in early September, said they would have preferred several years' autonomy first, as a preparation for full independence.

But by now it was too late. Habibie's decision was final. The U.N. took the view that in this khaki-dominated country the civilian Habibie himself might not last long and that his offer of a referendum might never be repeated. So the date for the vote was set; and a fuse lit.

The military were not going to give up East Timor without a fight. Bear in mind that most senior officers had served in the territory at some stage in their careers and believed in its integration into Indonesia. In battling the East Timorese independence movement and its guerrilla wing, Falantil, they saw themselves battling the scourge of international terrorism. During their postings, some officers had enjoyed the fruits of corruption. Losing East Timor felt like a betrayal.

The Indonesian army has long experience of handling rebellion. In the earliest days of the republic, when it set about crushing Communist forces, generals formed local militia groups. For spreading terror among a hostile population, nothing worked better than letting loose a vast gang of thugs. The same treatment was applied in East Timor, where some 30,000 militiamen were mobilized. One of the largest groups is *Aitarak*, which means "Thorn"; another is *Besi Merah*, which means "Red and White Iron." Their purpose was to keep East Timor Indonesian, to make sure people voted the right way.

There was careful planning behind this. I have seen an authenticated official document listing thousands of militiamen under the heading "Arrangements for the Referendum." Australian intelligence detected the construction of camps over the border in West Timor that have since been used for thousands of people deported from East Timor, all of them suspected of having voted for independence. One militia leader promised to turn the capital Dili into a "sea of fire." He did. The Red Cross, the Nobel laureate Bishop Carlos Belo, the United Nations, and foreign journalists were all targets, and were driven away. For at least two weeks, columns of smoke rose over the city. And the army? It stood by and watched. Some soldiers even joined in the carnage. The soldiers were filmed chatting happily to the militiamen. The U.N., in a rare move, stated publicly that it had evidence of collusion.

I put this to General Wiranto. Or rather to his back. "Many including the U.N. say you're actually behind this violence?" I asked. He swung towards me, irritated, unused to being pressed.

"No, no, that's not true, no way." And with that he stormed off, worried officers in tow.

We could take what he said at face value—that the U.N., the spies, the aid workers, and the television cameras have all been lying. Or we could assume the general was out of touch

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and simply didn't understand the gravity of what was happening. That would imply that he has lost control, and it would lend weight to the conspiracy theory that unknown plotters within the military high command are running their own agenda, dark forces somehow bidding for power. Another view is that Wiranto reluctantly accepted the loss of East Timor and wanted to unleash the militia thugs not to punish the people who had voted for independence but to warn people in other separatist movements not to push things too far. That would cast him in the role of a strongman—not a bad starting-point for anyone contemplating a bid for the presidency. The truth is, no one knows. Jakarta's political smog is impenetrable.

The price of this power play has been paid by the people of East Timor. An international peace force is deploying there, but far too late to stop the worst of the violence. We do not know how many people have died. But television pictures show an empty, ruined land and hungry refugees sheltering in the barren mountains. World leaders had warning of this deliberately engineered tragedy, but chose not to pre-empt it, only to react to it.

I asked my cameraman to film General Wiranto leaving Cilangkap. The khaki limousine sped off towards the presidential palace. I saw the general's rigid face in the back window, and he saw me. I waved, a gesture of courtesy. He did not wave back. **NR**

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'Strip-mining' the Dead

When human organs are for sale.

GILBERT MEILAENDER

ELIMINATE *suffering and expand the range of human choice.* That sentence expresses the moral wisdom toward which our society is moving, and it is very minimal wisdom indeed. We can observe this minimalism at work especially well in the realm of bioethics, where we seem unable to find any guidance other than (1) *relieve suffering* and (2) *promote self-determination*. In accordance with such wisdom, we have forged ahead in the use of new technologies at the beginning of life and—with constantly increasing pressure for assisted suicide—at the end of it.

Less noticed—and perhaps not quite as significant—is the continuing pressure to increase the supply of organs for transplant. For the past quarter-century, transplantation technology has made rapid progress, though the "success rates" given for transplants may often conceal an enormous amount of suffering and frustration endured by those who accept a transplant as the price of possible survival. During this time, there has been continuing debate about what policies ought to govern the procurement of organs from the dead for transplant. Should we simply wait to see whether the dying person, or, after death, his family, decides to offer usable organs? Should we require, as some states now do, that medical caregivers request donation? Should we presume that organs for transplant may be salvaged from a corpse unless the deceased had explicitly rejected the possibility or the family rejects it later? Should we "buy" organs, using financial incentives to encourage people to sell what they had not thought or wanted to give? And, if we did use financial inducements, could one also sell organs such as kidneys even before death?

What we think about such questions depends on why we think some people might hesitate to give organs for transplant. If their refusal is a thoughtless act, perhaps we simply need greater public education and awareness to encourage more people to give. If their refusal is not just thoughtless but wrong, perhaps we should authorize medical professionals routinely to salvage cadaver organs for transplant. If their refusal is selfish or, at least, self-regarding, perhaps we should appeal to their self-regarding impulses with an offer of financial compensation.

Moreover, if it is, as we are so often told, a "tragedy" or a "catastrophe" that many die while waiting for an organ transplant, perhaps we need to be more daring in our public policy. That is the view of many who are in the transplant

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business and many who ponder transplantation as a public-policy issue. While these issues have been debated over the last several decades, our society has steadfastly refused to consider any form of payment for organs. "Giving" rather than "selling" has been the moral category governing organ procurement. Indeed, the National Organ Transplant Act of 1984 forbids "any person to knowingly acquire, receive, or otherwise transfer any human organ for valuable consideration for use in human transplantation, if the transfer affects interstate commerce."

It's not hard to understand our national reluctance to permit the buying and selling of human organs for transplant, for it expresses a repugnance that is deeply rooted in important moral sentiments. In part, the very idea of organ transplantation—which is, after all, in Leon Kass's striking phrase, "a noble form of cannibalism"—is unsettling. If we cannot always articulate clearly the reasons that it troubles us, the sentiment is nonetheless powerful. To view the body—even the newly or nearly dead body—as simply a useful collection of organs requires that we stifle within ourselves a fundamental human response. "We do not," C. S. Lewis once wrote, "look at trees either as Dryads or as beautiful objects while we cut them into beams; the first man who did so may have felt the price keenly, and the bleeding trees in Virgil and Spenser may be far-off echoes of that primeval sense of impiety." Far more powerful impulses must be overcome if we are to view the human form simply as a natural object available for our use. Perhaps we are right to view it as such when transplantation is truly lifesaving, but doing so exacts a cost. By insisting that organs must be given freely rather than bought and sold, we have tried to find a way to live with this cost. The "donated" organ—even separated from the body, objectified, and used—remains, in a sense, connected with the one who freely gave it, whose person we continue to respect. By contrast, buying and selling—even if it would provide more organs needed for transplant—would make of the body simply a natural object, at our disposal if the price is right.

Our repugnance is rooted also in the sense that some things are simply not for sale. As a medium of exchange, money makes possible advanced civilization, which depends on countless exchanges in which our interdependence is expressed. But if we allow ourselves to suppose that it is a *universal* medium of exchange, we are bound to lose our moral bearings. Although there is nothing degrading about buying and selling, since exchange binds us together and allows us to delight in the diversity of goods, commerce enhances human life only when that life itself is not also turned into a commodity. Hence, our society has over time had to make clear that certain things—ecclesiastical and public offices, criminal justice, human beings themselves—may not be bought and sold.

Discussing the limits to money as a medium of exchange, Michael Walzer recounts an instructive story from our own history. In 1863, during the Civil War, the Union enacted an Enrollment and Conscription Act, which was the first military draft at the national level in our history. But the act contained a provision that allowed any man whose name was drawn in the lottery to purchase an exemption by paying $300 for a substitute (which, in effect, also offered an incentive for others who wanted or needed $300, even at the risk

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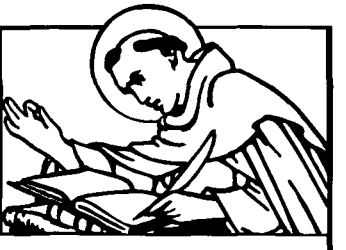

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of death). Anti-draft riots broke out in July 1863 after the first drawing of lots, and we have never since—at least in such overt, crass form—allowed citizens to buy their way out of military service. It is one of those things that should not be for sale, one instance in which money should not be allowed to serve as a medium of exchange, and so we block that exchange.

Similarly, we have decided to block exchanges for human organs, even though they do take place in some other countries. That decision has been under attack for some time. It has even been criticized by Thomas Peters, for example, as—behold here the degradation of our public moral discourse—"imposing" the value of altruistic donation on those who do not appreciate such a value or "coercing" families "to accept concepts foreign to them at a time of great personal loss." But the first real crack in the public-policy dike appeared in May of this year, when the state of Pennsylvania announced its intention to begin paying relatives of organ donors $300 toward funeral expenses of their deceased relative. (Clearly, $300 doesn't buy as much as it did in 1863.)

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Buying and selling would make of the body simply a natural object, at our own disposal if the price is right.

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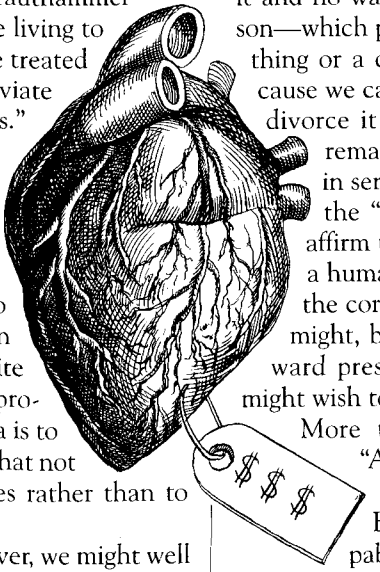
Pennsylvania's decision has been characterized by Charles Krauthammer as "strip-mining" the dead—and this in an essay defending the decision. It would, Krauthammer asserts, violate human dignity to permit the living to sell organs, but the newly dead body may be treated as a commodity if doing so promises "to alleviate the catastrophic shortage of donated organs." (Note, again, the language of catastrophe. Just as many workers might not have known their labor was "alienated" until Marxists told them, so we might not have thought it "catastrophic" that we die rather than strip-mine the human body in order to stay alive until transplant technology began to tell us it was.) Indeed, Krauthammer quite reasonably claims that the Pennsylvania program is, if anything, far too timid. If the idea is to get more organs for transplant, he suggests that not $300 but $3,000—paid directly to relatives rather than to funeral homes—might be more the ticket.



To the degree that he persuades us, however, we might well judge that Krauthammer himself has been too timid. Pennsylvania's plan for compensation continues to operate within the organ-donation system currently in place. It aims simply to provide a somewhat greater incentive for people to donate organs. What it will not affect is the reluctance—based in sound moral sentiment—of medical caregivers to ask dying people or their families to consider organ donation. If we really face a tragedy of catastrophic proportions, we might do better to allow organ-procurement firms seeking a profit to be the middleman. (After all, a human kidney was recently offered for sale on the Internet auction site eBay—and bidding reached $5.7 million before the company stopped it.) With profit to be made, firms would find ways to overcome our natural reluctance to ask others to strip-mine the dead body. We could deal not only with our reluctance to give organs but also with our reluctance to ask for them by letting the market do what it does best. That Krauthammer does not suggest this—even for organs from the dead—suggests to me that he finds more "dignity" than he thinks not only in still-living human beings but also in the newly dead body.

Or, again, if it is a catastrophe that we face, we might simply abandon the claim that it is always necessary to wait for death before procuring organs for transplant. For example, as Robert Arnold and Stuart Youngner have noted, a ventilator-dependent patient could request that life support be removed and that, eight or so hours before, he be taken to the operating room and anesthetized, to have his kidneys, liver, and pancreas taken out. Bleeding vessels could be tied off, and the patient's heart would stop only after the ventilator was removed later that day, well before the patient could die of renal, hepatic, or pancreatic failure. And, of course, if our moral wisdom is confined to relieving suffering and respecting autonomy, we may find ourselves very hard pressed to explain why this should not be done—especially in the face of a "catastrophic shortage" of organs.

One might ask, If my death is an evil, why not at least try to get some good for others out of it? If my corpse is no longer my person, as it surely is not, why not treat it as a commodity if doing so helps the living? Ah, but that corpse is *my* mortal remains. There is no way to think of my person apart from it and no way to gaze upon it without thinking of my person—which person is a whole web of human relations, not a thing or a commodity. A corpse is uncanny precisely because we cannot, without doing violence to our humanity, divorce it fully from the person. To treat those mortal remains with respect, to refuse to see them as merely in service of other goods, is our last chance to honor the "extraterritoriality" of each human life and to affirm that the human person is not simply a "part" of a human community. Perhaps, if we do so honor even the corpse, I or some others will not live as long as we might, but we will have taken at least a small step toward preserving the kind of society in which anyone might wish to live.

More than a quarter century ago, writing about "Attitudes toward the newly dead," William F. May called attention to one of the Grimm Brothers tales about a young man who is incapable of horror. He does not shrink back from a hanged man, and he attempts to play with a corpse. His behavior might seem childish, but it is in fact inhuman. And his father sends him away "to learn how to shudder"—that is, to become human. In our society—where we devote enormous energy and money to keeping human beings alive—perhaps we too, in the face of proposals to strip-mine the dead, should consider learning once again how to shudder. **NR**

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Taiwan: What China Really Wants

The island as strategic imperative, not emotional need.

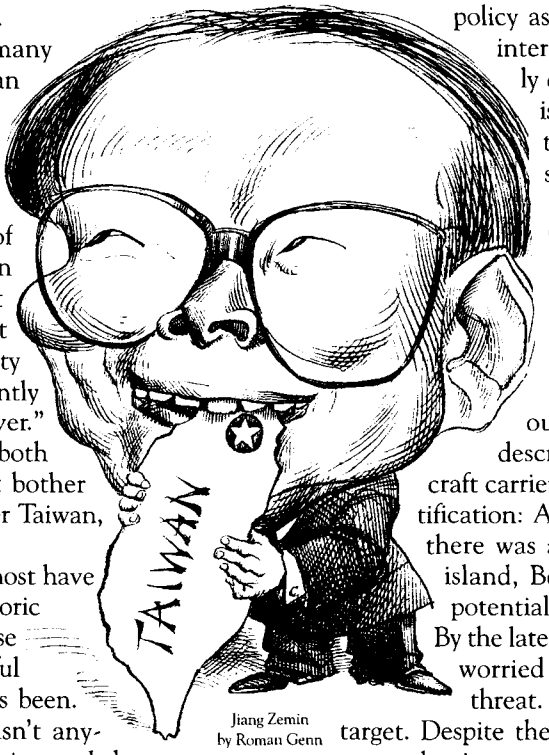
ROSS H. MUNRO

THE world in general, and the United States in particular, badly misunderstands China's Taiwan policy. We have an urgent need to see it for what it is.

Judged solely by official pronouncements from Beijing, that policy isn't a policy at all, but Chinese holy writ—an emotional, nationalistic position that is not open to compromise. "It remains the sacred mission and lofty goal of the entire Chinese people to achieve reunification of the motherland," declared President Jiang Zemin in 1995. This is his most important statement about Taiwan.

To listen to Jiang and many, many other Chinese officials, the Taiwan issue transcends logic and reason. China will pay any price—even sacrifice economic development—to achieve reunification or prevent the permanent division of the nation. China's stance on Taiwan, they say, doesn't reflect economic or military calculation. It is non-negotiable, or, as PRC deputy prime minister Qian Qichen recently put it, without "room for maneuver." The implicit but clear message for both Americans and Taiwanese? Don't bother resisting Beijing's efforts to conquer Taiwan, because it will never back down.

As for America's China hands, most have accepted Beijing's overheated rhetoric as an accurate reflection of Chinese policy—which shows how successful Beijing's propaganda campaign has been. In truth, China's Taiwan policy isn't anywhere near as emotional and sentimental, let alone irrational, as the Chinese themselves always try to suggest. Indeed, Beijing's dramatic statements on Taiwan, aimed primarily at the American audience, are designed in part to hide the fact that China's policy is actually quite rational and calculated. The reality is that Beijing's position on Taiwan is the product of a careful weighing of China's strategic interests.



Jiang Zemin
by Roman Genn

In the eyes of PRC leaders, Taiwan is first and foremost a strategic target that must soon be subjugated if China is to realize its goal of becoming Asia's dominant and unchallenged power. But the Clinton administration, unfortunately, with its persistent obtuseness, has failed to recognize China's policy as a clear challenge to the vital strategic interests of the United States. By progressively distancing itself from Taipei, the administration has only encouraged Beijing to take an increasingly shrill and aggressive stance on the Taiwan issue.

'AN UNSINKABLE AIRCRAFT CARRIER'

Even though this issue has been bathed in fervent sloganeering from the beginning, Beijing's Taiwan policy has always had a rational, strategic core. Until the 1970s, the Chinese leadership took seriously General MacArthur's famous description of Taiwan as "an unsinkable aircraft carrier" off the coast of China. With some justification: As long as Chiang Kai-shek was alive, or there was an American military presence on the island, Beijing could view Taiwan as at least a potential threat to China's security.

By the late 1970s, however, Beijing clearly no longer worried about Taiwan as a potential military threat. Nor did it view the island as a military target. Despite the government's regular, pro forma statements that it reserved the right to use military force to reunify Taiwan and the mainland, it engaged in no preparations for large-scale military action. As Michael Swaine, an expert on the Chinese military, observes, "the Nanjing Military Region, which is the one facing Taiwan, was essentially demilitarized for most of the 1980s. The Chinese didn't place a lot of assets there. They didn't train much in that area either." The de facto Sino-American alliance against the Soviets was one rea-

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son. China's low-key stance on Taiwan during this period can also be attributed to the Reagan administration's quiet but firm insistence after 1982 that it wouldn't make any further concessions on the Taiwan issue.

Downplaying the military option, China's paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, marshaled widespread support in the 1980s for a patient, long-term policy of wooing Taiwan by offering special terms to the island's business community for trade and investment. His goal was to encourage economic interdependence and foster a pro-mainland faction in Taiwan—in effect a potential fifth column—with an eye toward eventual political integration. By 1990, that policy seemed to be working. Two-way trade between the island and the mainland had increased to $4 billion, up from $80 million in 1979. Taiwanese companies had invested in an estimated 2,000 enterprises in China, a figure that would continue to climb.

■

Publicly, the Beijing regime, whose slogan is 'We shall never seek hegemony,' adamantly denies its true ambition.

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Taiwan faded not only as a military issue, but also as an emotionally charged, nationalist one. The old-fashioned and ideologically colored nationalism of the civil-war generation, for whom Taiwan's rulers had for decades been the enemy, was dying out, along with that generation.

While China's leaders insist that all Chinese fervently support reunification with Taiwan, there is abundant evidence that the Chinese public has long been apathetic about the issue. The results of an officially sanctioned 1998 poll indicate that Taiwan is a minor concern in the public consciousness. It found that 68 percent of urban dwellers identify Taiwan as the number-one issue hindering the improvement of U.S.–China relations. No surprise there, given that this assertion is regularly made by the Chinese leadership and repeated in the controlled media. What's noteworthy is the response to the follow-up question. Asked if they wanted Washington to end support for Taiwan, only 36 percent answered positively—which strongly suggests that most Chinese are quite comfortable with the status quo as it concerns Taiwan.

Yet the Taiwan issue is now close to the explosion point—and has been for several years. By 1994, China's military buildup had been refocused on Taiwan—in the medium term to develop the capability to invade the island, in the short term to modernize a few military elements so as to blockade Taiwan and attack it with missiles. Another aim was to raise substantially the potential cost to the United States of intervening in a military conflict to assist Taiwan. In 1995, Beijing ordered military exercises, explicitly aimed at intimidating Taiwan, that culminated in the 1996 firing of missiles into the island's air and sea lanes—in effect, a brief blockade. Now, of course, China is once again threatening to take military action against Taiwan.

For most American China-watchers, there is a single, simple explanation for Beijing's going in one decade from treating Taiwan as a secondary, long-term issue to suggesting bellicosely that it is on the verge of going to war over the island. That explanation is the rapid and dramatic democratization of Taiwan's politics under the leadership of Lee Teng-hui. Democratization quickly brought to a dignified end the political domination of Taiwan by an aging, mainland-born minority whose members strongly supported the goal of reunification, distant or not. Instead, Taiwan's newly democratic politics created a political consensus that now includes more than 90 percent of the population. That's the approximate portion of Taiwanese voters who oppose the island's reunification with the mainland anytime in the foreseeable future. Within that consensus are supporters of eventual reunification (in the distant future, when China is both democratic and much more developed economically) and dreamers who favor a truly independent republic. At its core, the consensus strongly supports the indefinite continuation of Taiwan's autonomous status.

Clearly, Taiwan's new, democratically driven assertiveness has been a cause of increased tensions with China. But it is a fundamental error to conclude that this explains sufficiently why China and Taiwan have twice gone to the brink of major military hostilities in just a few years. Put another way, we are witnessing much more than a simple process of Taiwan acting and China reacting.

THE SHIFT

In fact, the Taiwan issue would not be incendiary today if there hadn't been a momentous shift in Chinese Grand Strategy in the first half of the 1990s. Just as Taiwan was reaching a democratic consensus in favor of continued autonomy, the post-Deng generation of younger and more ambitious political and military leaders in China was adopting a new grand strategy. The goal of that strategy: to dominate Asia as every Chinese dynasty at the height of its power had done throughout history. Now as in the past, "dominate" for the Chinese usually didn't mean invade: China's size, wealth, and power were usually enough to intimidate its neighbors into subservience.

Suddenly, the Beijing regime saw Taiwan's autonomy—its de facto independence, so to speak—in a new and adversarial light: as a barrier preventing China from achieving its strategic ambitions. The new generation of political and military leaders had concluded by 1994 that, in order to achieve the goal of dominating Asia, it must first seize control of Taiwan .

The seeds of the new strategy can be found in 1989–1991, when the Soviet empire collapsed. Practically overnight, China found itself effectively unopposed on the land mass of continental East Asia. The Soviet armed forces no longer constituted a significant conventional threat on China's northern borders. These forces began withdrawing from Mongolia and from the newly independent Central Asian republics, all of which quickly became eager to reach modi vivendi with China. What was left of the Soviet military on China's border with Russia itself was a shadow of its former self. The Soviet collapse also forced Vietnam and India to abandon their adversarial stances toward China—stances

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they had been able to afford only with Soviet support.

The breakup of the Soviet Union and its bloc amounted to a lucky strategic windfall for China. Although it had played only a marginal role in that breakup, China became its chief beneficiary. Even without a military buildup, China's relative power in Asia and the world would have soared. With the buildup that began in 1989, and continues to this day, the shift in power has become even more pronounced.

During the same period, China's economy came roaring back to life. Its all-out boom had almost every CEO in the Western world salivating. This, too, had huge implications for China's relative power in the world, as those CEOs were all urging their governments to curry favor with a regime that had the power to include or exclude their corporations from China.

These were the heady economic and military circumstances in which the Beijing leadership consciously adopted the goal of becoming the dominant and undisputed power in all of East Asia.

The evidence that the Chinese leadership embraced this goal is overwhelming. Publicly, the Beijing regime, whose foreign-policy slogan is "We shall never seek hegemony," adamantly denies its true ambition. Yet the regime makes clear that it seeks to dominate Asia by reiterating a set of specific strategic goals that amount to the same thing. Those goals are: to control Taiwan and the South China Sea; to ensure the permanent strategic subservience of Japan; and to end America's military presence in Asia and its military links with Japan and other Asian democracies on China's periphery. If China were to achieve these announced goals, its hegemony over Asia would be both unquestioned and unchallenged.

If this reality isn't fully appreciated by non-Asian strategic thinkers, it is certainly appreciated in the region. Only when China controls Taiwan, or, more precisely, the island's air and sea space, can Beijing realistically pursue its more ambitious goals. Once China has Taiwan in its grasp, it will sit astride Japan's southern sea lanes, a lifeline connecting Japan to its petroleum supply as well as to several key markets. China would also effectively control all other nations' access from the east to the South China Sea, the crucial link between the Pacific and Indian oceans. The security of the Philippines would be immediately and acutely threatened, and other Southeast Asian nations would find themselves more vulnerable to Chinese coercion.

After late 1993 and early 1994, when the Chinese leadership adopted its new strategic goals, the shift in Beijing's policy towards Taiwan was dramatic. By mid 1994, the People's Liberation Army had become vocal about the need to plan for military operations against Taiwan no later than 1996. A Central Military Commission document dated 10 July 1994 took a particularly aggressive stance on the need for preparing to take military action.

Shortly thereafter, in September 1994, the PLA Navy conducted its first large-scale exercise in the East China Sea in many years. This exercise was later judged by analysts at the

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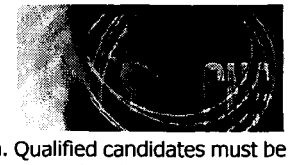

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U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence "the first of a series of rehearsals of a contingency scenario for the invasion of Taiwan." It was also a planned precursor to the much larger, and much more publicized, exercises that began in the summer of 1995 and ended in the Taiwan Strait crisis of March 1996. The timing of the September 1994 exercise suggests that the PLA was developing new war plans for Taiwan no later than early 1994.

In December 1994, the Chinese military establishment held what amounted to a closed-door "Invade Taiwan!" pep rally. Sponsored by the Ministry of National Defense and the PLA's General Staff Headquarters, the gathering was characterized by officials as a "report session on strategic policy on Taiwan." The main themes of the four-day meeting were that it would be necessary to use military force to achieve reunification and that "it will be better to resolve the issue of Taiwan earlier than doing it later. This will help develop the entire country and stabilize Asia and the whole world." It was also stated that "the most appropriate time" to attack Taiwan was between 2000 and 2005.

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The Chinese military establishment held what amounted to a closed-door 'Invade Taiwan!' pep rally.

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The timing of these events is significant. They all preceded—by many months—the announcement of Taiwanese president Lee Teng-hui's visit to Cornell University in New York, the event that most U.S. Sinologists identify as the turning point in China's Taiwan policy. Obviously, the Chinese leadership, particularly Chinese military leaders, seized on this event as an excuse to bare their real intentions towards Taiwan.

These developments put the supporters of Deng Xiaoping's gradualist strategy towards Taiwan on the defensive. Not coincidentally, Deng had slipped into physical and political decline. Although the regime never completely junked Deng's moderate, economically oriented approach to the Taiwan issue, Beijing has relegated it since 1994 to a distinctly secondary place in its Taiwan strategy.

The strategic shift was manifested not only in military doctrine and military exercises; there was also a significant shift in emphasis in several articles about Taiwan appearing in official Chinese journals. These articles all emphasized what a great strategic asset Taiwan would be if it were under Beijing's control.

The intellectual foundation for this new view of Taiwan had been laid in the 1980s by Liu Huaqing, when he was commander-in-chief of the PRC navy. Admiral Liu, who later became a Politburo member and vice chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission, then asserted that "the Chinese navy should exert effective control of the seas within the first island chain." By Liu's account, the first island chain comprises the Aleutians, the Kuriles, Japan (including the Ryukyus), Taiwan, the Philippines, and most of Indonesia.

A 1995 article in *The Navy* articulated China's strategic ambitions vis-à-vis Taiwan: "If [China] wants to prosper, it has to advance into the Pacific in which lies China's future. Taiwan, facing the Pacific in the east, is the only unobstructed exit for China to move into the ocean. If this gateway is opened for China, then it becomes much easier for China to maneuver in the West Pacific."

A 1996 article in another important PRC journal envisioned the "recovery" of Taiwan as giving China "a valuable military base." It saw, correctly, that breaching the chain of island democracies on China's eastern periphery would give China a huge strategic advantage:

> Taiwan is 900 nautical miles south of the outlet of the Yalu River, 800 nautical miles north of the Nansha Islands [in the South China Sea]. Its superior natural geographic position gives Taiwan Island a great [military] campaign and strategic value. A modern, Taiwan-based naval force could carry out a fully-mobilized attack throughout Chinese territorial waters within two days. Taiwan itself is a valuable military base to the mainland coastal region and to the entire Southeast Asian region as well . . .
>
> Taiwan is also the crucial point in the first chain of islands. . . . Taiwan is located at the point where these two important strategic areas [Northeast and Southeast Asia] meet—a pivotal point. In addition, heading east of Taiwan, crossing 1,200 nautical miles, one can advance on the second chain of islands. Simply from a military perspective, by strongly occupying Taiwan, one can show force in three areas. One could move at will across the length and breadth of the wide western Pacific Ocean, engaging in widespread mobile combat. This truly would be the wondrous effect of the "central location" in naval warfare. . . . Taiwan is the most convenient place from which China can venture forth into distant seas.

But perhaps the clearest evidence of Beijing's new strategic ambitions appeared in a March 1996 article published by *Taiwan Affairs*, still another PRC journal. The title alone—"Taiwan's Geostrategic Value Makes Reunification Essential"—says it all. After a couple of introductory sentences reiterating the usual argument that Taiwan has always been part of China, Lu Junyuan makes it plain that China's real interest in the island is as a strategically valuable piece of real estate. He summarizes his description of Taiwan's geographic location with the observation: "We can thus see that Taiwan occupies a unique and advantageous spot on the geostrategic map."

THE AMERICAN RESPONSE

All of this raises a momentous question: What are the implications for U.S. policy towards Taiwan?

First, we can see from the evidence just reviewed that the Clinton administration's current Taiwan policy is recklessly naïve. It is based on the assumption that, if pressured enough, Taiwan will make concessions sufficient to satisfy Beijing, short of its being swallowed up by the mainland. In recent years, U.S. officials and emissaries have been pressing Taipei to negotiate with Beijing. The administration escalated its pressure in

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March 1999, when it began to push the Taiwanese to reach "interim agreements" with China. The administration's dangerously flawed reasoning is that China desires merely symbolic or legalistic concessions, suitable for assuaging nationalistic passions. Then, lo and behold, life in Taiwan could go on largely as before, and stability would reign in the Taiwan Strait.

But Beijing has made it clear that it will not be thus satisfied. It will never be placated by any interim agreement that doesn't give it military control over the island. It would use any interim agreement as a new wedge with which to put pressure on Taiwan to capitulate.

Yet the Clinton administration's naïveté goes even further. The president and his top officials refuse to recognize that there is a fundamental strategic conflict of interest between China and the United States. China wants to dominate Asia, while the United States is still committed, as it has been for more than a century, to maintaining a balance of power in Asia and preventing any single power from dominating all of the region.

So how do administration officials explain the constant friction and intermittent crises that characterize U.S.–China relations? Their leading culprit is Taiwan. They often privately say that if only this major "irritant" were somehow to go away, U.S.–China relations would dramatically and permanently improve. So when Admiral Dennis Blair, the U.S. Pacific commander, recently referred to Taiwan as the "turd in the punchbowl" of U.S.–China relations, he was only repeating a sentiment widespread in the administration.

But such sentiments amount to collective self-delusion. In truth, any interim agreement between China and Taiwan would set the stage for renewed conflict between the two, and the United States would soon find itself in the middle again. Likewise, a real "end" to the Taiwan issue—that is, a Chinese conquest of the island—would set the stage for a dangerous showdown in Asia between the United States and China.

So, we may ask, Lenin-style, what is to be done?

First, learn from China. The Chinese are right in attaching enormous strategic importance to Taiwan. The United States has no military forces based in Taiwan, nor does it need them, as long as the island's own robust forces, equipped largely by the United States, continue to control its territory. The American military should remain the back-up force—ready to intervene in Taiwan's behalf if Taiwan is unable to counter a Chinese military offensive.

Second, reduce "strategic ambiguity." For many years, this policy towards prospective Chinese military action against Taiwan served us well. The Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 was the foundation of strategic ambiguity, committing the U.S. to supply Taiwan with adequate defensive weapons and declaring that the U.S. would view any Chinese military action against Taiwan with "grave concern." At the same time, the Act stopped short of extending an unconditional security guarantee to Taiwan, an omission that served as a warning to independence forces in Taiwan that the United States was not giving them carte blanche to declare independence and needlessly provoke China. That was the heart of "strategic ambiguity": Neither China nor Taiwan could be certain that the United States would intervene if China launched a military offensive.

Sadly, the Clinton administration itself has undermined strategic ambiguity by taking an increasingly unfriendly posture towards Taiwan at exactly the same time that China has escalated its threats and built up its military capabilities. The administration's stance has only encouraged Beijing to take a more aggressive stance towards Taiwan.

Washington should make it clear that further threats and military actions by China will result in the progressive reduction of America's strategic ambiguity. In short, more Chinese threats against Taiwan would only lead Washington to strengthen its commitment to the island. Beijing should be made to understand that the United States will intervene militarily in Taiwan's behalf should China attack. The only exception might be in the event of a formal and explicit declaration of independence by Taiwan and the establishment of a Republic of Taiwan—steps that have already been ruled out by all the major parties on the island as too provocative.

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Beijing should be made to understand that the U.S. will intervene militarily in Taiwan's behalf should China attack.

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A firmer U.S. position on Taiwan would reverberate among all of America's friends in the region. Our military presence there has become dangerously tenuous during the past few years—despite our inarguable military superiority. Our allies have become increasingly distrustful of our commitment to staying in Asia and maintaining a balance of power. A shoring up of our commitment to Taiwan would send them a new and reassuring message.

HIGH STAKES

We have looked at Taiwan as a purely military or strategic issue. We have left to the very end the main argument raised in favor of U.S. support for Taiwan: The United States has a moral commitment to Taiwan that overshadows any strategic interest. Taiwan is a democracy, indeed a democracy as full-fledged as the United States. It is an old friend of ours. Its people overwhelmingly oppose putting their fate in the hands of Beijing, and they are ready to fight to prevent that from happening. If the United States failed to come to Taiwan's aid, it would forever diminish itself.

And this brings us full circle—to the strategic imperative. For if the United States were to abandon an old and democratic friend to Chinese aggression, U.S. credibility in Asia would collapse. Countries ranging from Japan to the Philippines to Singapore would be forced to conclude that they cannot count on America in the future. These and other nations would have no choice but to stampede to Beijing, to reach an accommodation. And the United States would have no choice but to beat a hasty retreat from Asia, leaving it to a hostile and hegemonic China. And that, surely, would be a disaster. **NR**

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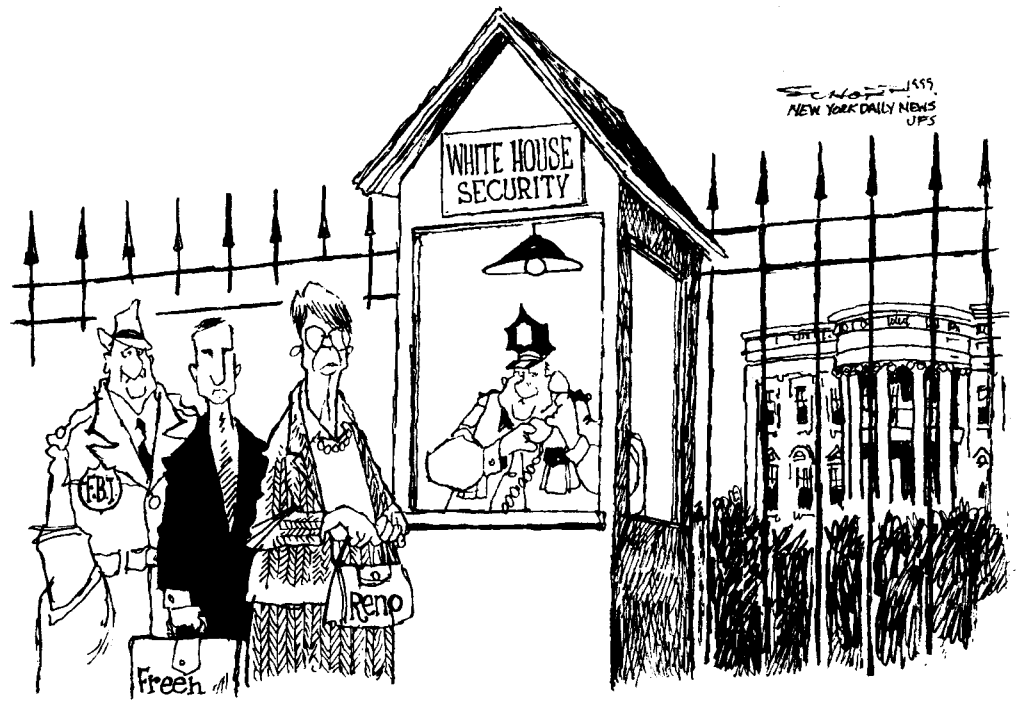

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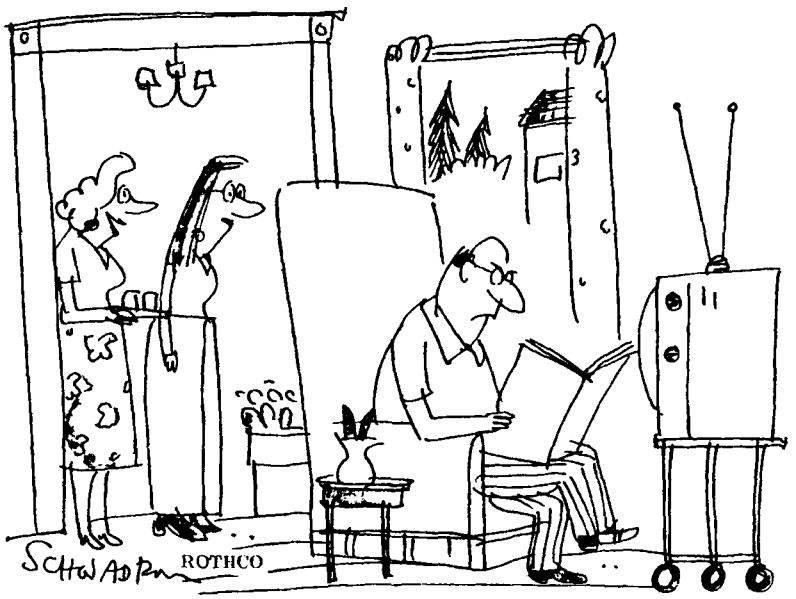
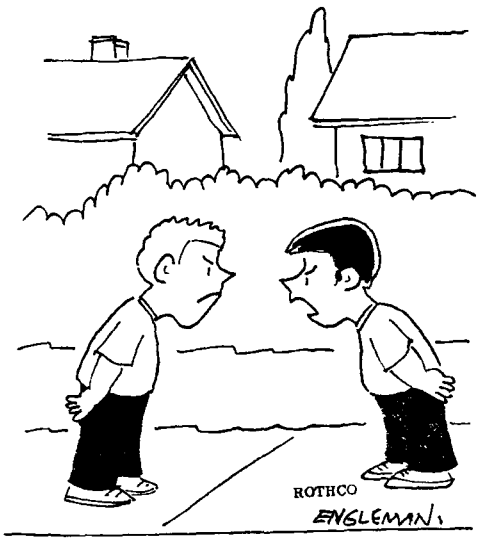


"Politically, Gerald refuses to be pigeonholed as a 'compassionate' anything."

"We were hoping to be accepted as we are."



"Oh, yeah . . . I'll bet you my father's cell phone is smaller than your father's . . ."

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

September 21, 1999

Dear Rusty,

Well? What do I do now?

I've spent the last couple of hours looking at poll data and following the Bradley surge—I mean, it's NOT a surge, it's just a bubble, really—which, in many ways, is a good thing. It keeps my supporters energized.

Tipper and the kids, though, are freaking out. The dinner table was pretty unpleasant.

"Oh my God, Dad, I'm going to be the next Eleanor Mondale!" shouted Kristin when she saw the numbers.

Tipper put her fork down and got very serious. "Al, tell her right this minute that she's not going to be Eleanor Mondale." Then she leaned in and whispered, "Eleanor's the one who spent an hour in the Oval Office with Bill and people are sure she . . ."

"You are not going to have to be Eleanor Mondale, okay?" I said. "All of you, listen up. These things are temporary. It happens to every sitting vice president who runs for the top job."

They continued eating. Tipper stabbed at her food.

"People are saying," Sarah mumbled, "that even if Buchanan bolts and runs for the Reform Party slot, he may not even get it."

"He'll get it," I said.

"But people are saying," she went on, "that even if he gets it, Bush could still neutralize him by running to the center. That pushes you to the left."

"Fine with me," I said.

Tipper dropped her fork with a clatter. Everyone looked up. She stared at me hard.

"I only mean," I said, slowly, watching Tipper's burning eyes, "that there's a way to be a moderate centrist on the edge of the rim of the shadow of the line to the left and still not alienate the suburban middle class. I think."

That's when Little Al started crying.

"I don't want to leave D.C.," he sobbed. "I've got friends here, and I play on the teams, and everything." His voice trailed off.

"There," barked Tipper. "Are you happy now?"

"What did I do?" I asked.

"It's not what you did, Al. It's what you didn't do. You didn't neutralize Bradley right off. You didn't engage him early. You shuffled your campaign team too often. You didn't go after Bush before he raised a jillion dollars. You blew the ethics card years ago. And now we all have to give this all up and move back to Tennessee to God knows what kind of life."

She threw her napkin down and stormed away from the table.

"Tennessee?" Sarah wailed. "I hate Tennessee!"

You see, Rusty, the whole problem with working things out with the family around is that there are too many cooks, you know? All the kids think that after eight years of this, they're experts. And Tipper is convinced that she's got the political instincts of Hillary Clinton. Which, when you look at my poll numbers, may be true.

It was so depressing, Rusty.

Then, one of those moments that make being a parent all worth while. Little Al looked up at me, eyes wide, and asked, "Dad, would it help if I got some kind of disease or had an accident or something?"

"Or started smoking?" Sarah chimed in.

"Now, kids," I said, "No one needs to get sick or hurt themselves just to help me get elected. OK?"

They all sat silently.

"I said, OK?"

They all nodded.

"At least through the primaries," I added.

Things are going to be okay, Rusty. Write soon!

Your pal, Al

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The Pole in Rome

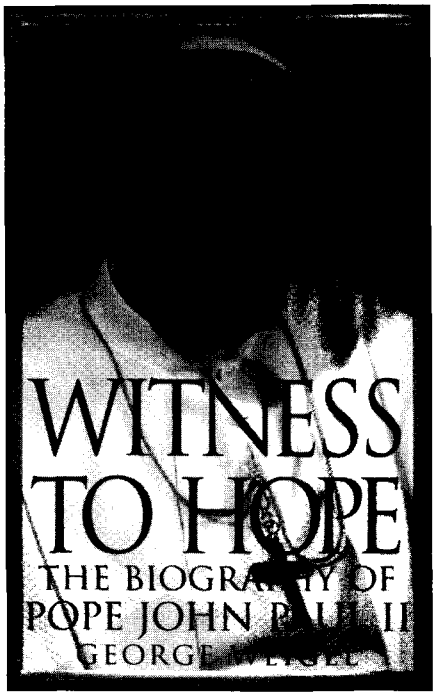
JAY NORDLINGER

Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II, by George Weigel (HarperCollins, 992 pp., $35)

THOSE who knew it was coming, knew it would be something good. George Weigel, the Catholic theologian and journalist, worked on his book for only three years—an astonishingly short time for a work so ambitious and important. His subject, the Pope, had asked him to write his semi-authorized biography. Weigel was thus given the opportunity of a lifetime; he has brought it off magnificently.

The book, *Witness to Hope*, carries a subtitle with an arresting little word in it: *The Biography of Pope John Paul II*. Note that wee "the." It is a brazen article—no "A Life" business for Weigel—but it is justified. The book is a thousand pages long, physically difficult to handle. The author, according to his publicist, was granted "unprecedented access to the Pope and the people who have known and worked with him." John Paul chose wisely in anointing Weigel, an American. The biography is thoroughly admiring—Weigel sees almost everything from the Pope's point of view, sometimes even seeming to inhabit him—but, then, there is a lot to admire.

When a book of this size comes along, one of two words is usually applied to it: "magisterial" or "ponderous." *Witness to Hope* is definitely magisterial, but it cannot escape stretches of ponderousness. As Weigel lays fact upon fact, episode upon episode, observation upon observation, the question arises, Is this a biography of record or a biography to be read? It is both, really. The book is nicely readable—despite some overwrought



prose of the "long, dark night of the Polish soul" variety—but it at times seems intent on welcoming everything in, reluctant to omit a jot or tittle.

The Pope, Karol Wojtyla, was born in the town of Wadowice, Poland, in 1920. His mother, Emilia, died when he was only nine. His father, also called Karol, was a military officer, with an intellectual and spiritual bent. The elder Karol sounds nothing short of ideal. John Paul would write that he and his father "never spoke about a vocation to the priesthood, but his example was in a way my first seminary." Weigel lays great stress on the Wojtylas' openness to Jews—almost to a defensive extent.

Young Karol, nicknamed "Lolek," was a person of remarkable accomplishment. He was mad for the theater, acting in plays and writing them, and soaked up languages, literature, and philosophy. He seems to have been every teacher's favorite student, every neighbor's favorite lad, every classmate's favorite friend. In 1938, he entered Jagiellonian University in Krakow, one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in Europe—where Copernicus studied, Weigel reminds us. A year later, however, the lights went out: The Stukas roared over Poland, and the Occupation—Wojtyla's most severe and most influential teacher—began.

Weigel's book is not only a major piece of scholarship, but a cracking good story—never more so than when it deals with the war years. Wojtyla had to take his studies underground, and he was also forced to break limestone in a nearby quarry. Weigel, as usual, provides the apt detail: Wojtyla and his comrades smeared petroleum jelly on their faces "to keep their skin from freezing." Polish life from 1939 to 1945, writes Weigel, "had a bizarre, even a surreal quality. It was not a question of knowing whether you would be alive next year"; it was a question of "knowing whether you would be alive tomorrow." When word arrived that France, too, had succumbed to the Nazi brute, suicides took place all over Poland. "There would be no help. There would be no spring. . . . Poland was a nation under ice."

After a period of "considerable interior wrestling," Wojtyla made the decision to become a priest. He was convinced of the power, says Weigel, both of "words" and of "the Word." His seminarial studies, too, had to take place underground. When the war finally came to an end, there was little relief: Soviet domination, and Communist rule, settled in. For Wojtyla, the deal at Yalta "became something more than the cruel truth that Poland, presumably one of World War II's victors, was in fact a double loser"; it represented "the triumph of a false and inhuman power realism over the moral pledges that the Western allies had made to Poland." The events of his life "chiseled" Wojtyla "into an early maturity." He was not, however, hard, cold; he was—everybody could see it—a man "who loved easily."

Wojtyla seems to have been an exem-

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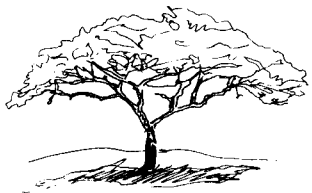
plary parish priest. It was his duty, he once remarked, "to live with people everywhere they are, to be with them in everything but sin." The vacations he took with his earliest followers—hiking, kayaking—were "pastoral opportunities." He has, writes Weigel, "a penetrating insight into those he meets, such that one wants to entrust him with one's decisions"; but "his signature phrase as a confessor and spiritual counselor has always been, 'You must decide.'" Reading some of the letters that Wojtyla has sent to members of his flock—sage, tender, brimming with love—we can see that, if one needs a priest, or a pope, one could do worse, much worse, than Wojtyla.

In August 1978, on the death of Pope Paul VI, the College of Cardinals elected a sweet and humble man who called himself John Paul. His was to be a very brief papacy; he died in September. When the College then selected Wojtyla—who, since his ordination as a priest, had been named bishop, archbishop, and cardinal—it chose the first non-Italian pope in almost 500 years and the first Slavic one ever. When the news reached Poland that its son had been elected, "a huge, spontaneous celebration erupted." Church bells rang, one after another, as "people poured into the streets with lighted candles and flowers, waving Polish flags, crying, embracing." No one could read these passages without experiencing shivers down the spine. The KGB, for its part, experienced shivers of a different sort—it "ordered up a special study on how Wojtyla had been elected and what his papacy portended."

John Paul II was a threat to Moscow because, as Weigel says, "he was a witness rather than a politician." He grasped that "the Gospel had public implications, and he never hesitated to draw them out, no matter how discomforting . . . for the wielders of worldly power."



Weigel describes the Pope's first visit to Poland, in June 1979, in thrilling detail. John Paul addressed a million of his compatriots in the flesh, and "tens of millions more on radio and television." As the Pope conducted a Mass in Warsaw, Edward Gierek, the country's Communist premier, "watched nervously from a window in a hotel adjacent to the square." According to Weigel, Soviet boss Leonid Brezhnev had warned Gierek not to allow the Pope's visit, but Gierek felt he had no choice. So did "Poland's 'second baptism,' which would change the history of the 20th century," begin.

About this matter of history: Weigel assigns John Paul a large role—even the leading one—in the dissolution of the Soviet Empire and the conclusion of the Cold War. He titles his section on the Pope's first trip to Poland "Nine Days that Changed the World." Now, the game of "Who won the Cold War?" rarely produces a satisfactory outcome. Some like to emphasize Ronald Reagan, others Mikhail Gorbachev, others a number of factors unrelated to individuals. Weigel records that Bishop Jean-Marie Lustiger, listening to a papal speech, "thought to himself, 'Communism is finished.'" Maybe so; but the Cold War was still a matter of guns and tanks and missiles, and the willingness of the men in the Kremlin to use them. Weigel does make short work of the notion—peddled most conspicuously by a book co-authored by Carl Bernstein—that the Vatican and the Reagan administration engaged in a "conspiracy" against the Soviet Union, or even cooperated with each other.

George Weigel has managed to learn and understand a staggering amount, conveying it all with lucidity.

Over and over, Weigel asserts that the Pope "inspired" or "triggered" a "revolution of conscience." We tend to nod at this assertion, and mouth it ourselves, but what does it mean, exactly? Surely the peoples of the Soviet bloc had always despised the system to which they were subject, and fought it as best they could; but in Berlin, Budapest, Prague, and other places, they were crushed by overwhelming material force.

Furthermore, when it comes to the power of the papacy, we face a conundrum. The controversy over Pope Pius XII, who presided over the Vatican during World War II and the Holocaust, is ever with us. On the one hand, John Paul II is said to have shaken up the world, brought down governments, repelled evil, and so on. On the other hand, Pius XII . . . well, he was merely pope. What could he do to affect the course of events? So, which is it? Does the pope have history-altering power or does he not? Perhaps, as elsewhere, it depends on the man who holds the office. It is enough that John Paul roused the spirits of millions of abused people, lessened their fear, and fueled them with hope.

John Paul, observes Weigel, considers Gorbachev a "providential man." Weigel, however, disagrees. He contends that the last Soviet leader "had no other choice" than to relinquish Poland and the other satellites. "Given his own domestic problems, he was in no position to reassert the Brezhnev Doctrine." Really? Weigel notes that this "does not seem to have been the view of John Paul or his Polish colleagues in the Vatican." Although the Pope "had gotten completely beyond a traditional Polish view of the Great Power to the east culturally and spiritually," he "had not fully done so politically." This is one of the few instances in which Weigel rather condescends to his man. It could be that the Pope knew more about this situation—had a keener grasp of the significance of Gorbachev—than does his Boswell.

Weigel has managed to learn and understand a staggering amount. His book is dotted with set pieces—essays, lessons—on an array of subjects. We read mini-biographies of dozens of figures. We are treated to European history, Church history, and diplomatic history. We receive sound explanations of, for example, "liberation theology," the Edith Stein controversy, the Kurt Waldheim affair, and the renegade and excommunicated Archbishop Lefebvre. Weigel is, among other things, a lucid explicator of his Church and its doctrines and policies. Sometimes he writes like a man afire, charged by the momentousness of his subject and task.

It is Weigel's guess that John Paul has stamped the papacy for years to come, returning it to "its evangelical roots." No

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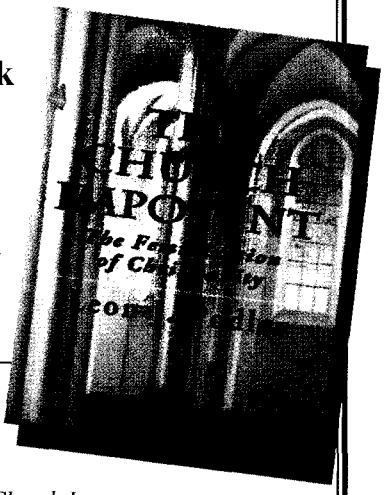

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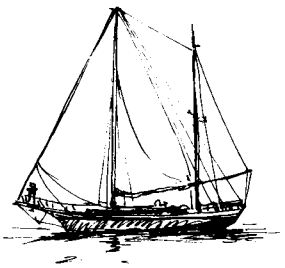
longer do people "think of the pope as the chief executive officer of the Roman Catholic Church." Weigel also believes that the present pope may someday be known, like a Gregory and a Leo before him, as John Paul "the Great." One thing is certain, made unmistakable by *Witness to Hope*: Rarely has there been so perfect a marriage of man to job as Karol Wojtyla to the papacy. He was appointed at just the right time, and he has met his obligations superbly. The same may be said for his biographer. **NR**

Nixon Rising

CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

The Contender: Richard Nixon: The Congress Years, 1946–1952, by Irwin F. Gellman (Free Press, 590 pp., $30)

A QUARTER-CENTURY after Richard Nixon was jeered from the presidency, it has become customary to read his whole career as a prelude to that spectacular disgrace. Historians scan every step of Nixon's rise for evidence of the bitterness, paranoia, and dishonesty that would turn his countrymen against him in 1973 and 1974. Chapman University historian Irwin Gellman, having mined the archives of the Richard Nixon Library, thinks that's a mistake. In the opening volume of a projected multi-volume biography, Gellman follows Nixon from his first congressional race in 1946 to his selection as Dwight Eisenhower's vice-presidential candidate at the 1952 Republican convention. The Nixon who emerges is hardly without blemishes—but neither was he discernibly more bitter, paranoid, or dishonest than his contemporaries.



Our post-Watergate understanding of Nixon's entry into politics leans heavily on rumors that were already circulating during the Truman administration. In 1952 the California leftist Ernest Brashear claimed in *The New Republic* that a shady group of oil and banking interests had bankrolled Nixon's congressional career. That line has since been taken up by—to take just a sampling of the writers and institutions Gellman assails—Roger Morris, Frank Mankiewicz, *The Progressive* magazine, and the Women in Politics Oral History Project. The assertion of secret money is a myth, Gellman insists—and the proof is that the Nixon campaign's expenditures were modest enough to be accounted for by its meager budget. While Nixon was indeed selected by a committee, ringleader Herman Perry was only a small-town bank manager, hardly the "financier" of recent accounts.

What Perry and others sensed was that the incumbent Democrat in Nixon's home district, just east of Los Angeles, was vulnerable. Jerry Voorhis was an upright Christian socialist who had been named the "hardest working man in Congress." He was also a sanctimonious know-it-all well to the left of his constituents. Nixon campaigned door-to-door for ten months. Voorhis was kept out of the district until the closing days of the campaign by a hectic legislative schedule and an emergency hemorrhoid operation. He denied taking money from CIO-affiliated political-action committees with Communist ties, but soon had to admit he had done so. At a handful of debates, Voorhis was under-prepped and Nixon wiped the floor with him. In 1947, aged 33, Nixon went to Congress with the first Republican majority since the Hoover administration.

It was in his 1950 Senate race against Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas that Nixon gained his reputation as a rough campaigner. Rough he was, Gellman says, but no rougher than his opponent. Douglas launched her campaign with a broadside against the moderate Democratic incumbent Sheridan Downey—who responded in kind. Downey's handpicked successor, the Los Angeles *Daily News* publisher Ralph Manchester Boddy, attacked her leftist voting record and her dismal attendance, and dubbed her "the Pink Lady." Once Douglas won the nomination, her campaign against Nixon was marked by the constant taunting that brought "Tricky Dick" into the American vernacular. Douglas entered the fray with big credibility problems—one of the hardest-line leftists in Congress herself, she claimed that Nixon's lack of vigilance had led to the Communist invasion of South Korea. Nixon fought back hard. He published a "pink sheet" that linked Douglas's voting record to that of the fellow-traveling American Labor Party congressman Vito Marcantonio. With the backing of dozens of the state's most prominent Democrats, Nixon beat Douglas 59–37 percent—the widest margin in any Senate race that year—and took 311 of 320 precincts.

Gellman's Nixon is hardly without blemishes—but neither is he discernibly more bitter, paranoid, or dishonest than his contemporaries.

While anti-Communism became the signature issue of Nixon's four House and two Senate years, that enthusiasm, Gellman shows, was not a venting of inner demons but an accident of his committee assignments. Chosen for the Herter Committee that toured war-wrecked Europe on the eve of the Marshall Plan, he witnessed a Communist coup attempt in Trieste, and grew intent on defending Europe's democracies against violent takeover. Appointed to the House Un-American Activities Committee, where his predecessor Voorhis had served, he kept his distance from the racist Mississippian John Rankin and the corrupt chairman, New Jerseyite J. Parnell Thomas. When other Republicans urged outlawing the Communist party and banning the teaching of Marxism, Nixon sought a balance between fighting subversion and protecting free speech.

Thomas's ill-health—and later incarceration for graft—vaulted Nixon to a lead role on HUAC at just the time

Mr. Caldwell is senior writer at *The Weekly Standard*.

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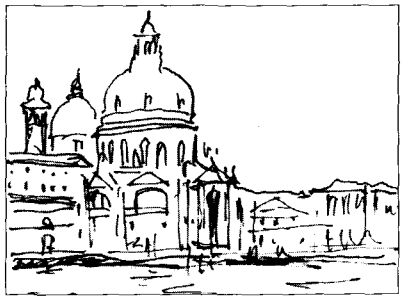
Whittaker Chambers leveled his accusations at Alger Hiss. While Nixon has been vindicated by history for backing Chambers, he did not back him in any knee-jerk way. He started off biased in favor of Hiss, even traveling to New York to grill Chambers in an executive session over the inconsistencies in his story. But if Nixon emerged as a hero from the affair, it is because there was a logic to his anti-Communism that eluded most politicians of both parties. Hard-line Republicans wanted vigorous anti-Communist action at home but worried little about a strengthening Soviet position abroad. Most Democrats—and President Truman was typical in this respect—were willing to fight Communism militarily but cavalier about responding to grassroots worries about subversion. (Gellman holds this nonchalance at least partly to blame for McCarthyism.) Nixon, by contrast, sought to "fight Communism in the United States," as he said, "on the same realistic basis that we are already committed to fighting it abroad."

Such balance made Nixon, even at age 39, a logical choice as running mate for the internationalist moderate Dwight Eisenhower. What's more, he had pulled the nifty electoral trick of uniting California's semi-partisan moderates and its hard rightists—exactly the conflict that threatened to split the national GOP between Eisenhower's backers and supporters of Ohio senator Robert Taft. Nixon, at the close of the Truman administration, looked very much like the future of American politics.



Gellman is a clunky and repetitive writer, prone to malapropisms. He thinks minimalist means minimal, that administer means minister, that concise means precise. Disinclined to speculate on motives or psychology, he hews somewhat grimly to his sources, and often appears at the mercy of them. Wherever too much information is available—the square footage of the *Queen Mary*'s dining room, the grades Nixon's congressional successor got at USC—the book bogs down. But this is a fair and thorough work that does far more than replace one oversimplification with another. There is considerable new material about Nixon's early deviousness that is absent from the work of even his most bilious detractors. Gellman thinks Nixon used his friendship with the FBI's congressional liaison Louis Nichols to gather information on the black Communist Benjamin Davis. He also establishes that Nixon gave his young ally Joe Holt the confidential HUAC dossier of Holt's primary opponent, who had flirted with Communism in his youth. This is an indication that Gellman, in coming volumes, will seek to present Nixon not as a power-mad monster but as a fairly representative politician who, somewhere along the line, went bad. But when?

Nixon pooh-poohed Truman's desperate 1948 campaign against the "Do-Nothing" 80th Congress. It hadn't been a Do-Nothing Congress, after all. Republicans had passed the Taft-Hartley Act to bridle unions—the only taming of a New Deal initiative until the Clinton welfare reform. It had cut taxes, passed the Marshall Plan, and—not least—begun to root Communists out of government. Thinking of himself (mistakenly) as a typical American, Nixon knew in his heart that his countrymen would choose the Republican program over Truman's gimmicky collection of race initiatives and socialist housing programs. They didn't. He trusted Americans to see through the stunt of Truman's whistle-stop campaign. They didn't. Truman's victory—bringing with it a Democratic House majority that would endure for 44 of the next 46 years—bowled Nixon over.

And he started down a dangerous road. Two decades later, he would distrust a huge swath of his fellow-countrymen with a paranoia verging on hatred. The standard version of the Nixon story—that Nixon, cunning from the outset, plotted and lied his way to power—is a disturbing one. Since Gellman doesn't buy the line that Nixon was unusually or innately rotten, his version of the story promises to be more disturbing still. **NR**

Nativist Son

ANDREW J. BACEVICH

A Republic, Not an Empire: Reclaiming America's Destiny, by Patrick J. Buchanan (Regnery, 389 pp., $29.95)

IN his previous book, *The Great Betrayal*, Patrick Buchanan unleashed a furious broadside against free trade and U.S. international economic policy. In this latest work, he takes on American foreign policy more generally. *A Republic, Not an Empire* blends history and advocacy. As history, it is derivative. As a manifesto calling for the United States to abandon its quasi-imperial pretensions, it commands attention. Yet the inadequacies of Buchanan's prescriptions show just how difficult the task of articulating a credible alternative to globalism really is.

Had it appeared just three years ago, *A Republic, Not an Empire* would have filled a gaping hole in American historiography. Ever since World War II, a liberal internationalist consensus has dominated the writing of diplomatic history. Beginning in the 1960s, challenges to that consensus emanating from the Left began to receive serious attention. But even as Marxists qualified for a respectful hearing, those who interpreted U.S. foreign policy from an avowedly nationalist perspective were effectively silenced. In 1997, Walter McDougall forced his way into the conversation with *Promised Land, Crusader State*, ending the exclusion of those routinely (and slanderously) vilified as "isolationists." Although executed with Buchanan's characteristic brio, *A Republic, Not an Empire*—as a contribution to history—is little more than a knock-off of McDougall's pioneering work.

But we don't read Patrick Buchanan in search of scholarly insight. We read

Mr. Bacevich is a professor at Boston University, where he directs the Center for International Relations.

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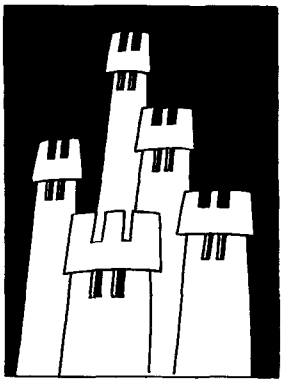
him because, to a greater extent than most others in national politics, he thumbs his nose at orthodoxy and rejects conventions to which more refined members of the establishment defer. While other politicians engage in phony debate about differences that are actually quite marginal, Buchanan claims to divine the existence of real choices.

Here, Buchanan promises an antidote to what he calls "compulsive interventionism." His book should be judged on the basis of whether it fulfills this promise. If Buchanan in fact details a plausible alternative to the post-Wilsonian internationalist consensus, *A Republic, Not an Empire* succeeds. If Buchanan simply rails against America's global responsibilities—rejecting them without proposing a realistic substitute—the book is simply an expression of petulance.

For most readers, the book must stand or fall on its concluding section, in which Buchanan outlines "A Foreign Policy for America." The conservative pundit and presidential candidate, of course, does not hide his disdain for the Clinton administration's obsessive pursuit of economic globalization and its penchant for military adventurism. But he is equally critical of those conservatives "who believe our Cold War triumph empowers us to go abroad in search of monsters to destroy." Both camps aspire to a global hegemony that in Buchanan's view is unsustainable and sure to generate a dangerous backlash.



In lieu of such grandiose ambitions, Buchanan would substitute a policy of "enlightened nationalism." This means, broadly, that the United States should reclaim its freedom of action, bring ends back into balance with available means, and expend its power only when "vital interests" are at stake.

Enlightened nationalism, according to Buchanan, "holds America to be a completed nation." The overriding imperative, therefore, is to hang on to what we have—using foreign policy chiefly as a means to defend our territory and preserve our common identity. To keep the world at bay, Buchanan relies first of all on geography: terrain, land borders, and ocean barriers. These keep people where they belong.

Or at least they should: Buchanan worries a lot about the nation's changing ethnic composition. By 2040, he writes, "a majority [of Americans] will no longer claim Europe as their ancestral home." The problem, says Buchanan, is

■

Buchanan would apply to the 21st century the politics of the 19th as if the 20th had never occurred.

■

that the new immigrants from Asia and Latin America don't readily assimilate; nor do they provide suitable material for making real Americans.

This is nativism. Within not too distant memory, bigots used similar arguments to justify discrimination against Catholics and Jews arriving from places like Poland and Lithuania and Italy. Today these places qualify as part of Buchanan's "ancestral home," but mere decades ago they were seen as breeding grounds for people of inferior stock. Buchanan's exclusionist argument is an unworthy one; at times, it comes precariously close to being simply odious.

How do the principles of "enlightened nationalism" translate into specifics? In essence, Buchanan would apply to the 21st century the policies of the 19th as if the 20th had never occurred. He would convert North America above the Rio Grande into a Euro-American bastion. Toward that end, he would reinstall the Monroe Doctrine as the true "cornerstone of American foreign policy." Buchanan would seal borders to shut down illegal immigration. To forestall the possibility of a Spanish-speaking 51st state, he would grant Puerto Rico independence. To forestall the threat of mass migration from Cuba, he would cut a deal with Castro.

Buchanan's emphasis on hemispheric affairs has an acquisitive as well as a

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protective dimension. With an eye toward the possible break-up of Canada, he would offer interested provinces admission into the Union. (Presumably, only Anglophones need apply.) He would also annex Greenland, adding its vast, empty spaces to an ostensibly "completed nation."

Outside of the Western Hemisphere, the implications of "enlightened nationalism" are almost entirely negative. "The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans are America's security belt," according to Buchanan. With that in mind, he would remove U.S. troops from Europe and amend the NATO charter so as to require explicit congressional authorization before involving the U.S. in any European conflict. Buchanan would disengage militarily from the Far East, turning over to others the problem of managing China. He would withdraw all U.S. troops from Korea. He would jettison the policy of containing Iraq and Iran and would terminate all aid to Israel (and just about everybody else). In effect, he would withdraw from the Middle East. He would also pull the United States out of the World Trade Organization.

Nowhere does Buchanan consider how such a radical American retrenchment might affect the behavior of other nations. "It is time to let go of empire," he declares. The only way for Americans to shake their "imperial" habit is to go cold turkey: Just quit, and the consequences will presumably take care of themselves.

But this will not do. Having mounted the tiger, Americans cannot simply declare themselves tired of the ride. Having sought and acquired a position of global dominance (and privilege), we cannot simply quit as if walking away from an irksome summer job.

To wean the United States from its infatuation with imperial responsibilities and prerogatives is an enterprise fraught with delicacy. It requires sound strategy, not nostalgia. If *A Republic, Not an Empire* represents the best that self-described nationalists can offer as a blueprint for that strategy, then they have lost the argument. **NR**

It's Witchcraft

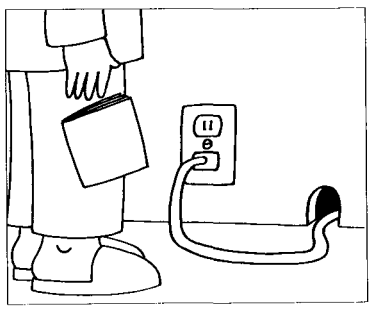
ANDREW STUTTAFORD

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic Press, 309 pp., $17.95)

Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic Press, 341 pp., $17.95)

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, by J. K. Rowling (Scholastic Press, 435 pp., $19.95)

IT'S enough to make you choke on your fava beans. In bookstore new-fiction aisles, this was meant to be the summer of Hannibal Lecter: aesthete, Renaissance scholar, and serial killer. Instead he has had to share the limelight with Harry Potter, the schoolboy hero of a series of British children's books. The second of these, *The Chamber of Secrets*, was released in the U.S. at about the same time as Thomas Harris's *Hannibal*. On September 19, more than three months later, it was Number Three on the *New York Times* bestseller list, five places ahead of the unfortunate Dr. Lecter. The same week, the first Harry Potter (*The Sorcerer's Stone*), which has been on the list for the better part of a year, came in at Number Two. That's pretty good for works of very English fantasy, and astonishing for books aimed at children. To add to the cannibal's misery, the most recent Harry Potter, *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, has now arrived in America, released early by its U.S. publishers as a result of the large number of copies of the British edition that were making their way across the Atlantic.



Mr. Stuttaford is a writer based in New York.

Probably by broomstick. For the Harry Potter books are about witches and wizards. In the finest tradition of children's stories, Harry is an 11-year-old orphan being brought up under appalling conditions by grotesque relatives. But, as always in these tales, our hero discovers that he has another, greater destiny. To find his future, Arthur pulled a sword out of a stone. Young Potter just receives letters, hundreds of them, delivered by owls. Harry Potter, it turns out, is a wizard, and he is required to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Not least because he has an enemy, Voldemort (the splendidly chosen names are one of the strengths of these books), a great wizard who has gone over, as George Lucas would recognize, to the dark side. Voldemort was responsible for the deaths of Harry's parents and wants to finish off the son. If Harry is to survive, he will need all the training he can get in the magical arts. The books (there will eventually be one for each of the seven years Harry is due to spend at Hogwarts) detail his adventures at the school and the intensifying struggle with the forces of the wicked Voldemort.

The lesson of Harry Potter is that well-crafted, intelligent stories can indeed flourish in the marketplace.

So far, so good, but this is unexceptional stuff, not enough to explain why so many people are wild about Harry. Part of the answer, of course, lies in skillful marketing, not only of the novels but their author. And why not? Hers is a story almost as magical as Harry's.

J. K. Rowling was a divorced single mother on welfare at the time she wrote *The Sorcerer's Stone*, mainly, it is said, in an Edinburgh cafe (her apartment was too cold). A Kinko's Cinderella, she couldn't even afford to photocopy her manuscript. She typed it out twice on, naturally, a battered old typewriter. In interviews she comes across as a pleasant sort, the only worrying note coming

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when she describes her books as "moral."

Moral? In the sanctimonious world of contemporary children's literature, that's a frightening word, all too often a synonym for "politically correct." Rowling does her best to oblige. Minority characters are carefully included in a saga that is otherwise inescapably Anglo-Saxon. Unusually for an English boarding school, Hogwarts is coeducational. Its principal sport, the enjoyably savage Quidditch (a sort of aerial hockey), can be played by both sexes. Harry's boarding house includes girls on its team: Their unpleasant opponents at Slytherin House do not.

It's no surprise, therefore, when Rowling reveals leftish social prejudices all too typical of the British intelligentsia. Harry's main rival at the school, nasty Draco Malfoy is—two strikes—both rich and aristocratic. Meanwhile, the dysfunctional Dursleys, Harry's ghastly family, are a caricature of the vicious bourgeoisie that would have delighted Vyshinsky. They are contrasted with the poor-but-happy Weasleys, a wizard household that befriends Harry. Old man Dursley is a brutish capitalist, director of a company that makes drills. The Bob Cratchit-like Mr. Weasley, on the other hand, is a good-government type, a noble, underpaid bureaucrat at the Ministry of Magic.

But by the standards of our irritating era this is mild. Neither Harry nor any of his circle appears to have two mommies, inner-city malaise is confined to the sinister folk in Knockturn Alley, and no one hugs a Whomping Willow tree (it would hit back). The Potter phenomenon is, in fact, reassuring. The lad's no pinko. There is plenty here for the more traditionally minded, and tradition sells, it would seem. Part of the appeal of these books is that they offer fantasy, but within a reassuring structure. There are rules.

Hogwarts School is strict, and its exams are tough. Strip away the contemporary trimmings, and the reader is left with a rather old-fashioned English boarding-school tale, even down to the feasts. Harry "had never seen so many things he liked to eat on one table: roast beef, roast chicken, pork chops and lamb chops, sausages, bacon and

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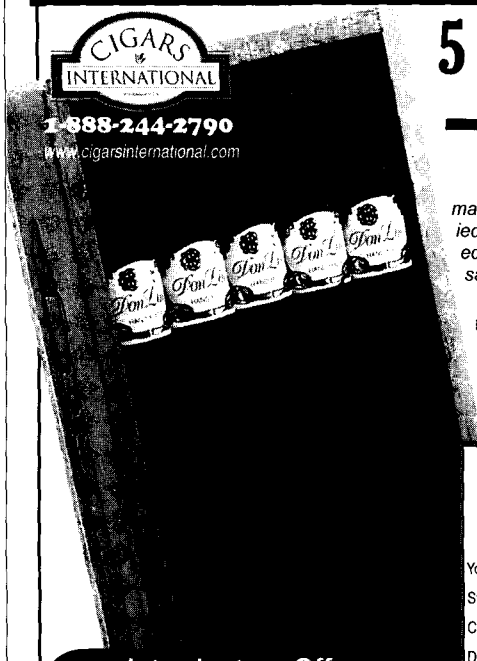

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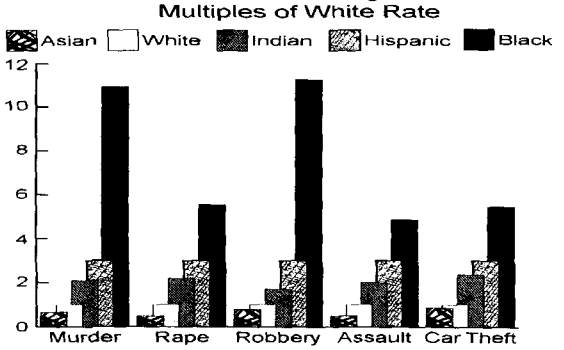

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steak, boiled potatoes, roast potatoes, fries, Yorkshire pudding, peas, carrots, gravy, ketchup, and for some strange reason, peppermint humbugs." This is not a school for our tofu times.

Nor is it for wimps. There are plenty of challenges for Harry, almost none of which can be resolved by "counseling." Undaunted, he tries to do the right thing. This is a boy who sticks by his friends, and they stick by him. There is evil and betrayal, but by the final page, the bad guys are generally in disarray. Children still like a happy ending and a hero to cheer for. And who better than Harry? He is no comic-book savage. Laudably enough, he wants to avenge his parents, but he doesn't want to lose his humanity (if that's the word for a wizard) in so doing.

And Rowling does not lose sight of her principal objective, which is to tell a good story well. The writing is vivid and of high quality—it has to be to hold a child's attention for over 300 pages (books in R. L. Stine's bestselling *Goosebumps* series are around 150 pages each). The lesson of Harry Potter is that well-crafted, intelligent stories can indeed flourish in the marketplace—if the gatekeepers of our contemporary culture give them a chance. Tellingly, a British publisher that rejected *The Sorcerer's Stone* did so because it was "too literary."

If this is another way of saying that the author doesn't patronize her readers, it is true. Unlike many writers of children's books, she doesn't talk down to her audience. She is not, however, writing for their parents. Harry's adult fans (so many in the U.K. that the British publisher produced an edition with a more "grown-up" cover to allow them to read it in public) need to get a grip. Comparisons between Harry Potter and the immortals of children's literature should also be treated with care. The greatest of the classics retain their appeal over the years. They are more than a craze. With the much-hyped Harry it is still too early to say, although the signs are good that Hogwarts will stand the test of time. But what's the hurry? We don't yet know how the saga will end. Voldemort still lives. **NR**

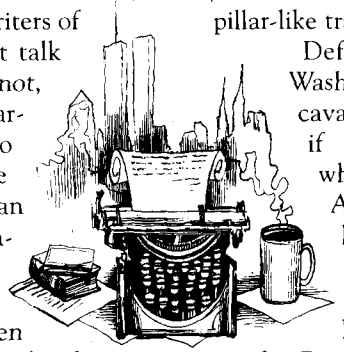
■ CITY DESK ■

War in the Streets

RICHARD BROOKHISER

WHEN you think of the American Revolution, you think of Boston, Philadelphia, or other ye olde cities. But New York was where President Washington was first inaugurated, and it was also where General Washington suffered his most crushing defeat. The fight for New York occurred as the summer of 1776 turned to fall, and 223 years later I was filming it, with Manifold Productions, for a documentary for PBS.

In July and August the British put 30,000 troops on Staten and Long islands. Washington had 19,000 troops on Manhattan and in a line south of the village of Brooklyn. The key maneuver occurred in the middle of the night of August 26–7, when the British on Long Island flanked the American left on the Flatbush Road. The spot, then a rural crossroads, is now deep in the borough of Brooklyn. We shot a stand-up on an elevated subway platform, serenaded by converging, caterpillar-like trains.



Defeat is an orphan. If Washington had had light cavalry to guard his flank; if Nathanael Greene, who had devised the American battle plan, had not been ill and left the command to underlings; if a tavern keeper had not shown the British the way . . . For whatever reason, the enemy sneaked 14,000 men behind the American line and at dawn hit it from the front and the rear.

On the left and center, there was only carnage. "The Hessians and our brave Highlanders gave no quarter," wrote one Brit, "and it was a fine sight to see with what alacrity they dispatched the Rebels with their bayonets." Only on the right did the rebels hold their own.

The right was between Third and Fifth avenues, from Sunset Park back to Park Slope. The only way out of the beleaguered position, to the American inner lines on Brooklyn Heights, was across a tidal creek (now the Gowanus Canal). But the tide was coming in, and so was the enemy.

The Gowanus Canal is a somber channel. Old chairs and sewing-machine stands poke out, coated with white gunk, like George Segal sculptures. In the depths, I saw a crab (pre-seasoned, with a battery-acid finish). What had once been turmoil is now placid post-industrial decay.

■

Watching the debacle from a hill, George Washington exclaimed, 'Good God, what brave fellows I must this day lose.'

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A brigade of Marylanders, under the right's commander—William Alexander, "Lord" Stirling (a New York merchant with an imaginative Scottish title)—covered the retreat of the survivors. The situation was so desperate, all they could do was attack, which they did six times. There were 400 Marylanders when the fighting began; when it ended, 256 had been killed. Watching the debacle from a hill (where there is now a bank on Atlantic Avenue) and unable to send reinforcements, Washington exclaimed, "Good God, what brave fellows I must this day lose."

The dead were buried on a Dutchman's farm. In the 1950s, their remains were found under an auto-body shop. Congress directed the Army to make the site a national cemetery, but it's still an auto body shop. The cooperative owner let us shoot the lifts and the tires. Down the block there is usually a plaque, except when vandals unscrew it

Mr. Brookhiser, an NR senior editor, is author most recently of *Alexander Hamilton, American*.

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for its bronze; when we filmed, there was a rectangle of plaque-shaped unfaded paint.

Washington managed to ferry his survivors to Manhattan on the night of August 29–30; burning campfires and a providential fog kept the British unaware. In 1999 amateur rowers repeated the trip in daylight, in five-oar boats. I rowed behind a lady violin-maker from Germany. We passed only one dead thing in the East River. "Jimmy Hoffa," said the cameraman.

The fighting on Long Island had cost us 500 dead, and 1,000 prisoners, though we had also shown some skill and honor. When the British landed at Kip's Bay on eastern Manhattan on September 15, there were no casualties, because this time the Americans ran.

Washington heard the opening British cannonade at his headquarters in the country house of Robert Morris, which still stands at 160th Street, east of St. Nicholas Avenue. Riding down to the scene along the Post Road, he arrived in about half an hour. Taking a cab in rush hour, we took longer. When he reached the high ground behind the American lines, at about 34th Street and Lexington Avenue, he saw chaos. "I used every means in my power to rally [the men] and to get them into some order," he wrote next day, "but my attempts were fruitless and ineffectual." "The ground was literally covered with arms, knapsacks, staves, coats, hats," wrote a (fleeing) soldier. Worse than defeat, this was dishonor; worse even than that, it was dishonor that Washington seemed powerless to avert. For a man obsessed with reputation and control, this was one of the worst moments of his life. Nathanael Greene wrote that Washington let his horse trot listlessly towards the advancing enemy, until an aide pulled him to safety.

There is not even the ghost of a plaque, where the cabs barrel down Murray Hill. There are the cathedral-less spires of the Chrysler Building to the north, and the Empire State Building to the west—the ultimate vindications of our efforts, though the tall, anguished Virginian had no inkling of them then. If memory is too much to ask of commuters—and it may be—we should at least cling to aspiration. Our striving was bought with death and despair. **NR**

■ FILM ■

Hot 'Burbs, Hotter Paris

JOHN SIMON

SIX years ago, I reviewed a silly, frilly, very southern play, *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*, by one Alan Ball, who subsequently became a producer of television's *Cybill*, among other unremarkable achievements. Now he has written a supposedly highly original screenplay, the cinematic debut of the noted British stage director Sam Mendes, entitled with portentous vagueness ***American Beauty***. It has been hyped as well as reviewed ecstatically as the most important American film of the fall, the year, the ages.

It stars the gifted and currently most prestigious actor Kevin Spacey as Lester Burnham, a reporter who lives in a typical American suburb (aerial view, of course) and, as narrator, informs us that he is already dead (shades of *Sunset Boulevard*). But this was the year, he says, he started to live. His wife is Carolyn (Annette Bening), a hard-edged, somewhat fading fashion plate and not very successful realtor. They have a sullen teenage daughter, Jane, who, in a pre-title sequence, bemoans her "horny geek boy" dad, and seems to mean it when she asks her boyfriend to off him.

The film allegedly pushes the envelope. This consists of the following items. 1) Carolyn wakes up at night to find Lester masturbating next to her, unrepentantly. 2) Lester falls madly in love with Angela, Jane's classmate and chum, a very blonde and extremely promiscuous brat ready to have an affair with him as soon as he builds up his physique. 3) Recording Lester's feverish workouts is Ricky, an 18-year-old neighboring voyeur with a video camera, surreptitiously shooting him, and more often Jane, through their windows. 4) Ricky's father, the despotic ex-Marine Colonel Fitts, with a pitifully repressed wife, spies on his son's every step and fre-

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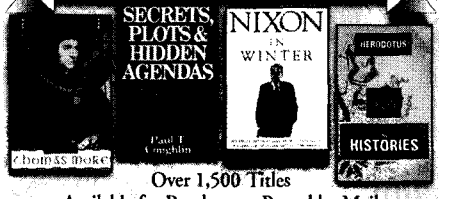

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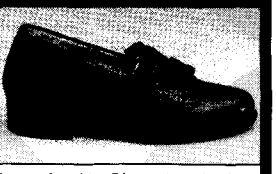

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quently mauls him. Even so, he is unaware that his son's affluence stems not from working for a caterer, but from pushing hard drugs, which the boy also consumes. 5) Frigid Carolyn, who won't have sex with Lester, has a liberating affair with her envied and admired "King of Realtors," pretty boy Buddy Kane (Peter Gallagher).

All right, I'll throw in 6) Colonel Fitts, who wrongly suspects Ricky's friendship with Lester to be sexual, reveals something previously hidden when he suddenly kisses Lester passionately on the mouth. Clearly the film should be called *Suburbia Confidential*, not *American Beauty*. Of course, the reference may be to the carpet of red rose petals amid which Lester keeps fantasizing the naked Angela. And now for my final plot revelation, 7) Lester, sick of his bourgeois existence, throws away his job to become a counterman at a hamburger joint. The only reason I withhold 8)—whether Lester actually beds Angela or not—is that the film turns opaque at this point. It happens (or doesn't) on what may or may not be the very couch where Carolyn refused herself to him, lest he spill his beer on the expensive fabric. Add to this the ever so groundbreaking feature of baring the breasts of both young actresses: Thora Birch (Jane) and Mena Suvari (Angela).

The dialogue has its moments, and Mendes has directed with a certain flair. The performances, except for Wes Bentley's wooden Ricky, are adequate,

■

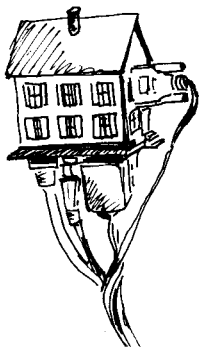
What I find salient about *Romance* is how boring it is to sit through.

■

though with no great depths to plumb. The veteran cinematographer Conrad Hall gets nice effects, often in chiaroscuro, to prove that this is an art film. Thomas Newman's music tries to be arty, but is mostly irritating.

And now one more farewell gift to you, 9) The Burnhams' other neighbors are a homosexual pair, both cutely called Jim (Jim #1 and Jim #2). According to the film's press kit, the two are "probably the most normal people in the neighborhood." For the little we see them, they may even be the most normal in the world. Or not.

■ That we are at least somewhat lower than the angels no one will dispute: the question is merely how much lower. Take boxing. What is so noble about a crowd wildly egging on two men—or, latterly, even two women—to pummel each other into bleeding lips, broken noses, eyes punched shut? We can idealize prizefighters in print or on screen, but a couple finding pleasure in, let us say, heterodox fashion is taboo?



All that by way of introducing *Romance*, a French movie from Catherine Breillat that attempts to challenge this taboo. A novelist, scenarist, director, and occasional actress, the 51-year-old Breillat has made several daring films of her own; has collaborated on screenplays for Fellini, Liliana Cavani, Maurice Pialat, and others; and has produced three children. But it is in *Romance*, which she wrote and directed, that she goes farthest. "It's hot," she says, "but it burns like ice."

What makes the film unusual is that, unlike most erotica, written by and for men, it is by a woman and aimed at women: *Romance* caters squarely to female fantasies. Marie, a teacher, lives with Paul, a male model, in an all-white apartment. We see them briefly on their jobs, more often in bed together. We note that Marie (Catherine Ducey) is barely attractive in either face or body, which predicates loss of male interest but allows for identification by a greater number of women viewers. Next, we find out, both visually and verbally, that Paul is no longer interested in making love to her.

Marie now embarks on that staple of erotica, the sexual quest, as she cruises around Paris in Paul's Mercedes convertible. In a bar, she picks up an Italian, Paolo, who, without love, satisfies her sexually. Played by the Italian porn star Rocco Siffredi, he provides sex that is uninhibited and unlimited. But Marie wants something more; presumably a fusion of Paolo and Paul.

The color scheme now turns to red. One of Marie's adventures is with a Middle Eastern fellow, who at first seems very obliging, but then roughly sodomizes and dumps her. She gets involved with her school principal, a vastly experienced lothario, who gags and elaborately binds her, but never goes beyond what she assents to—clearly a Sunday sadist for mild masochists. Neither young nor handsome, he speaks literately and thoughtfully, exemplifying cerebral sex. Much of the film is quasi-philosophical wordmongering.

As Marie becomes more liberated, Paul's physical interest revives, but, in another commonplace of the genre, she no longer wants him, even though she gives birth to his child. This, Breillat says, is really Marie's rebirth. She will no longer be obsessed by Paul, or have to pursue other obsessive fantasies. The moralistic conclusion is another staple of the genre.

What I find salient about *Romance* is how boring it is to sit through. Whatever it means to women, all it says to me is: better honest pornography than this pretentious claptrap. **NR**

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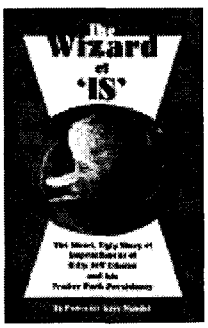

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Watch Your Language, W.

NEW YORK, AUGUST 13

A FORTNIGHT before Iowa's straw poll there was light criticism of George W. Bush by several commentators, most pointedly George Will, who pronounced the governor more nearly a boy than a cowboy. Gary Bauer chimed in, focusing on the same interview that generated Will's criticism; and so, indirectly, did Gen. Colin Powell, who said that perhaps George W. "still has to fill out his suit."

There are three targets, two stationary, one floating. This last has to do with: Did George W. ever use cocaine? He has declined to answer the question, pleading that his other life, when young and dissolute, is behind him, and whatever self-indulgences he engaged in are simply irrelevant in evaluating the man who seeks the presidency.

This position one judges perfectly satisfying to those whose curiosity stops before the point where prurience begins. Yet assuming he did once use cocaine, he is probably better off saying so than waiting at every press conference for the next six months to be re-asked the question.

The second criticism is of his apparent insouciance, revealed in his interview with Tucker Carlson in *Talk* magazine, in speaking of the execution of Karla Faye Tucker. The point is made that any governor who has the right to arrest the hangman's hand should acknowledge the gravity of his authority. "It's tough stuff," Gov. Bush told the interviewer, "but my job is to enforce the law." Yes, but not to mock appeals for clemency.

What has got him into more serious trouble is his carefree use of the f-word.

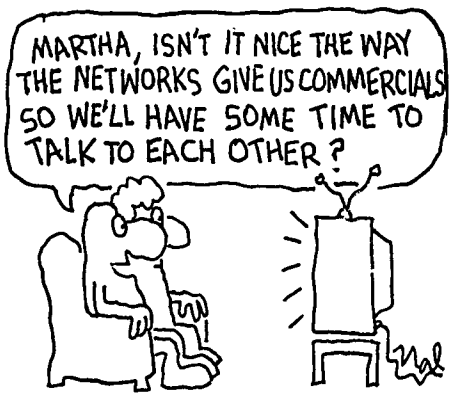
Now this is a problem. The word now appears with metronomic regularity on television and in movies. Tina Brown, editor of *Talk*, let little time go by before pushing to one side the taboos observed by the august William Shawn, whose desk she took over at *The New Yorker*. The *New York Times* still observes the protocols, and one rather hopes will continue to do so, even though the grey lady carries the whole thing to rather preposterous lengths (you can't write "hell").

Now the f-word shocks or doesn't depending on the context. Years ago when Norman Mailer wrote *The Naked and the Dead*, he everywhere replaced the word with "fug." Prof. John Roche reviewed this exercise in *The New Leader* magazine and made the useful point that the word in question is used so commonly in barracks talk as to lose entirely any capacity to arrest attention, let alone shock. But by using a synthetic substitute, the reader was constantly being stopped on colliding with "fug." This had the effect of wrenching the reader from the general hypnosis Mailer was struggling to create.

The word is commonly used, in informal surroundings, as a simple intensifier. Yet if the scene is shrouded with the flimsiest veil of formality, the word shocks. A young man (my son) used the word in a humorous talk at a commencement ceremony (at age 21). I used its relatively anemic cousin, the s-word, in a commencement address, making a point uniquely illustrated in that fashion.

If we project the use of the word at the rate of its normalization during the past generation, it would seem to be headed to absolutely routine life, which incidentally would impoverish the language (an intensifier intensifies if sparingly used). An unabridged Webster's 1913 dictionary gives, in response to the query, "No definition available." The modern (and indispensable) *American Heritage Dictionary* lists eleven uses of the word, as noun, adjective, and verb. It contributes, moreover, an engrossing short history, which should be looked at by political candidates.

"The obscenity f— is a very old word, first recorded in English in the 15th century. Age has not dimmed its shock value, even though it is in print much more often now than in the past. Its first known occurrence, in a poem entitled 'Flen flyys' written sometime before 1500, is in code, illustrating the unacceptability of the word even then. The poem, composed in a mixture of Latin and English, satirizes the Carmelite friars of Cambridge, England, with the title taken from the first words of the poem, 'Flen, flyys, and freris,' that is, 'fleas, flies, and friars.' The line that contains f— reads 'non sunt in coeli, quia gxddbov xxkxzt pg ifmk.' The Latin words 'Non sunt in coeli, quia' mean 'They [the friars] are not in heaven, since.' The code 'gxddbov xxkxzt pg ifmk' is easily broken by simply writing the preceding letter in the alphabet [making allowances for differences in alphabet and spelling]. . . . The whole thus reads in translation: 'They are not in heaven because they f— the wives of Ely [a town near Cambridge].'"



It would be useful for George W. to practice saying Gxddbov xxkxzt—and we'll all know what he's trying to say, and won't take offense.

Another View On Abortion

NEW YORK, AUGUST 17

TWO years ago, fellow critics of the Supreme Court's decision in 1973 overturning the states' abortion laws met to ask, How might opponents of abortion proceed to make their case and advance their arguments without slamming shut the gates on civilized political exchange? After innumerable meetings and much correspondence, a statement emerged, endorsing a bill that has been introduced in the New Jersey legislature. It is called the Post-Viability Abortion Ban bill.

The common insight was to the effect that Republicans and Democrats should collaborate to make progress in modest measures toward the desirable goal, which, of course, would be a society in which abortion was voluntarily rejected by mothers as a means of dealing with unwanted pregnancies. Simply to call for a constitutional amendment (which will never happen), it was agreed, is to forfeit practical measures that might save individual lives by making incremental progress against abortion on demand.

One participant thought it useful to grab the brass ring held out by Gov. Christie Whitman's message of 1997, when she vetoed the bill outlawing partial-birth abortion (the bill was passed over her veto). Gov. Whitman argued that she thought the attempted prohibition unconstitutional (the court subsequently affirmed her judgment) but suggested that a different formulation on the abortion question might be welcome.

A state senator has introduced a bill, which will be debated this fall. The orga-

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nizers mobilized their little legion, and the legislation has been endorsed by nine men and women whose opposition to abortion has been categorical, but who believe that incremental progress is the reasonable way to go.

Charles Colson is a signatory, the learned and adamant head of the Prison Fellowship. Robert P. George is an illustrious legal and philosophical figure at Princeton University. Mary Ann Glendon is similarly renowned at Harvard. Donald P. Hodel was president of the Christian Coalition, and signatory Randy Tate was its executive director. Fr. Richard John Neuhaus is editor of *First Things* and a formidable figure in the world of political morality. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese is another scholar and author, and this journalist and Peter Flanigan, a prominent figure on Wall Street who has engaged in civic and educational work, are the remaining signatories.

The Right to Life spokesman in New Jersey, Mrs. Marie Tasy, immediately opposed the bill. She does so on the grounds that it would have no effect.

Now the Post-Viability Abortion Ban bill specifically fails to list vague concerns for the mother's mental health as permissible grounds for an abortion. By closing that door, an enormously important step is taken. Pro-life opponents of the bill reason as follows: The mother who wants a late-term abortion is not going to arrive at the abortionist's door with a physician to plead her case. The abortionist will be the only doctor on site, and it is likely that he will be tempted to give medical arguments for proceeding to do what he is in the business of doing, never mind the penalties in the bill: $25,000 per illegal abortion.

The signers of the statement anticipated that objection, acknowledging that there are unscrupulous physicians in the land: "We fully support the clarifying and strengthening of the bill's language to protect against such abuses, so long as it does not destroy the possibility of the bill's becoming law."

Seventy percent of the American people oppose partial-birth abortion. State senator Joseph Kyrillos, who introduced the Post-Viability bill, is not himself opposed to all abortions. But he correctly views his measure as a step in the direction of new social formulations. If you want an abortion, get it before the human tissue discarded could actually live, if protected, outside the mother's womb.

The New Jersey initiative should advance political reasoning on an issue concerning which polarizations are sometimes formed at the expense of human lives.

The Long Reach Of Coke

NEW YORK, AUGUST 31

THE questions lit up by the rumor about George W. Bush and the use of cocaine, followed by his refusal to talk about the subject, have opened up broad discussions in which Gov. Bush is integrally involved, because now the question has become less, Did George W. do it back then?, than, Does George W.'s situation merit a re-examination of drug policy?

Gov. Gary Johnson of New Mexico volunteered his own history on a radio program. Yes, he had used marijuana, as also cocaine. He regretted having done so but thought the time had come to ask the central question: Is it good policy to pursue and handle drug users in the way we are now pursuing and handling them? Sixty percent of the prison population in Texas is there for drug abuse. Eighty million Americans have used illegal drugs. Forty percent of black Americans in their twenties are under scrutiny of the law, in prison, on parole, or under investigation, mostly for drug offenses.

Now Gov. Bush is centrally involved in the drug-policy question because, of course, he is running for office as chief law-enforcement agent and has staked out a position on law and order. That position has been described aphoristically as "incarceration is rehabilitation." That translates to: Put them in jail, and crime will decrease, inasmuch as criminals can't practice their profession while in jail.

But the fundamental question, neatly raised by Gov. Johnson, has to do with the definition of crime. If possession of marijuana is a crime—which it is in 47 states—then 80 million Americans are going about our business notwithstanding a "criminal" past. On the graduated question of cocaine, one notes that the United States has 5 percent of the world's population and consumes 50 percent of the world's production of cocaine.

Conceive a fantasy: You are required to push the A button or the B button. The A button would instantly incarcerate all illegal-drug users. The B button would drop charges against illegal-drug users. Which button would you push? Does your allegiance to law and order propel you to put millions of people in jail? Or are you inclined to modify your opinion about what should be a jailable offense?

Gov. Bush is up against it. One letter-writer in St. Paul, Minn., put his point acidulously: "I think a cocaine-besmirched George W. Bush should run for president only after he has waited out the number of years that a cocaine possessor might be sentenced to under his own Texas drug-prohibition law." The writer engages in a paralogism—George W. isn't asking the public to condone past behavior, no more than St. Augustine did in his *Confessions*. But the governor could contribute something on the order of an Augustinian review of the moral history of the whole problem, and it could begin by acknowledging that mandatory sentences for drug offenses are miscast ideas, requiring, among other things, a new look at what is or ought to be a drug offense.

Gov. Bush could do this, could comment on the recommendation of the Nixon commission back in 1973, which argued against the wisdom of prison sentences for those found in possession of marijuana for their own use. Certainly he could opine on the disparity in the federal law against cocaine use and against crack cocaine.

The temptation, surely, will be to say that as chief executive of the state of Texas his warrant is to apply the laws, as passed by the legislature. But just as, if he becomes president, he is called upon to make recommendations to Congress, he has made recommendations to the legislature in Austin, and two of these have touched on the drug problem. Gov. Bush signed in 1997 a bill mandating that judges sentence first-time felons convicted of possessing a gram or less of cocaine to a minimum of 180 days in a state jail. That position contrasted with that of his predecessor. Gov. Ann Richards gave first-time offenders automatic probation with drug counseling.

It is, of course, possible that after three, five, ten weeks, the problem will simply go away, even as Mr. Clinton's problems—adultery, draft evasion, marijuana, lying—went away. But Gov. Bush has the special hardship Republicans (and indeed conservatives) have, which is that they tend to be judged by tougher standards. That is as it should be, but San Mateo, Calif., letter-writer Dr. Tom O'Connell writes persuasively in the *Chicago Tribune*, "Speaking as the parent of three now-mature Baby Boomers, . . . I'm reluctant to vote for anyone who grew up during that era in our history and never experimented with drugs even once. The only person I'm even more reluctant to vote for is someone who did—but now refuses to come clean." But then that is Pontius Pilate time: How do you define clean?

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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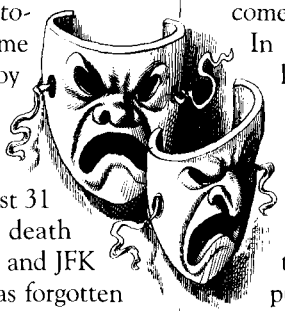
■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

IT is not in the nature of ghouls to get a grip on themselves, but the grief junkies and sidewalk mourners of the English-speaking world seem to have lost interest in both Princess Diana and JFK Jr.

In view of the close death dates involved I expected them to mark the end of summer with a final commemorative immolation on the twin pyres of hysteria—a double header, so to speak. Mohamed Al-Fayed would fill Harrod's with portraits of Diana, Dodi, John-John, and Carolyn, all together in Paradise; and some enterprising American toy maker would come out with four teddy bears joined at the hip. But it didn't happen. The August 31 anniversary of Diana's death passed almost unnoticed, and JFK Jr.'s demise on July 16 was forgotten so fast it was as if it had never been.



Two factors explain the short-lived death of JFK Jr., the first being the media's delayed reaction when they remembered that dwelling on dead Kennedys invariably leads to discussions of torch-passing. Nobody wanted to get into this because the remaining Kennedy men are so nefarious or inadequate that the only torchbearer the family has left is Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who is almost as exciting as Al Gore and Bill Bradley.

Now lieutenant governor of Maryland, KKT has a personality that recalls yearbook profiles that say "Honor student, loves animals. Hobbies: thimble collection." Fearing for their ratings if she won the veep spot on an already stuporous Democratic ticket and they had to cover her for months on end, TV honchos decided to censor all further mention of JFK Jr. so that nobody would breathe a word about torches.

The other reason JFK Jr. vanished twice has to do with his sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette. No one quite knew how to react to this third death. The extreme care the media took to include her name in every bulletin screamed afterthought, but to grief junkies, who are connoisseurs of the finer points of morbidity, three in a grave simply isn't done. It was as if Romeo and Juliet had died with Juliet's nurse. They saw Lauren not as a tragic figure but as someone who had made bad travel plans. Their collective subconscious transformed her into the woebegone antihero described by the phrase "along for the ride": the näive teen in a car full of thuggish friends who flee before the cops come, leaving him as the sole suspect. In short, the tragicomic figure known as the goat.

The sidewalk ghouls felt cheated, but they didn't know what to do about it until the news that the Bessette family might file a wrongful-death suit gave them the permission they needed to put JFK Jr. out of their minds.

As the date of Diana's death approached, the world braced for the Brits to writhe again, but they showed instead a restraint bordering on indifference. Various theories arose. Some observers put it down to the chastening nature of second anniversaries; once we can no longer say, "This time last year she was alive," the mourning is complete. Anglophiles insisted that "English blood will tell"; the grief junkies, they said, were so ashamed of their unbuttoned behavior that they had resolved to heed a blast from the past: Captain Smith saying "Be British" to the *Titanic* stokers just before the boilers blew up.

My own theory took shape as I watched *Diana: The People's Princess*, the British television movie that ran on Labor Day weekend.

This may be the worst movie ever made, with wooden actors obviously chosen solely for their clonelike resemblance to the real-life characters. Diana, played by Amy-somebody, keeps running through Mediterranean villages with paparazzi in hot pursuit, wailing, "Why cawn't they give me my privacy?" The little-girl dresses she wears in these chase scenes are intended to underscore the pathos of her situation, but with her long skinny legs pumping away under thigh-high skirts she looks like an aging colt.

In the scenes with William and Harry the hugs never stop and are hard to distinguish from first downs. William flings himself into her arms while Harry takes flying leaps over the back of the sofa into her lap.

Democracy never rests either. Requesting the press to leave the future King of England alone, Diana whimpers, "William will freak out." Announcing dinner to the princes of the blood and their mother, no longer an HRH but still the daughter of an earl, her butler pops his head in the door and says, "Grub's up." Once they're all at the table, sensitivity is served.

Diana: "One in four Angolans has lost a limb to land mines."

Harry: "Really? I didn't know that."

No attempt is made to dramatize the story; the time line consists solely of dates flashed on the bottom of the screen so that we can do the arithmetic and think, "She had only one week to live." Nor are there any flashbacks. It would be sadistic to introduce them because they would disorient the millions who followed the original breaking news from start to finish. Like children hearing a favorite bedtime story for the thousandth time, grief junkies know the precise order of events and won't have it any other way.

Creative imagination is dead. We know Diana wore white capri pants and a black blazer on the night she died; we know Dodi wore blue jeans and a brown suede jacket; we know which arm he had around her; we know the order in which the entourage entered the revolving door at The Ritz; and the movie gets it all exactly, compulsively, obsessively, clonishly *right*, even to the point of casting the actors in a black-and-white security-camera shot to replicate the real black-and-white security-camera shot as seen on TV.

No wonder the Brits didn't go to pieces this year. If they can't do it exactly the way they did it the first time, including another funeral and a Royal Horse hussar whose chin strap comes loose three-point-four meters in front of the Abbey, they won't do it at all. **NR**

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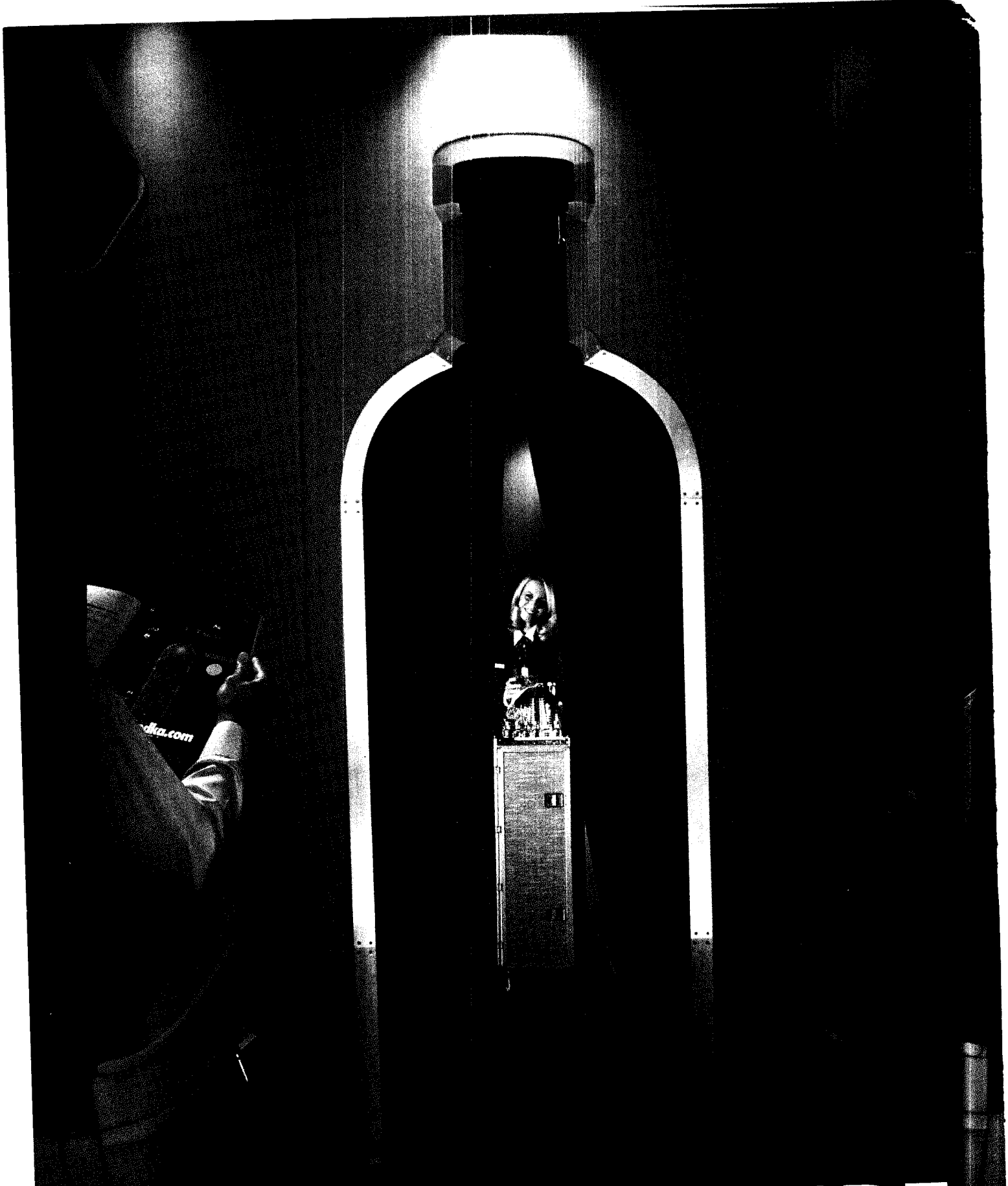

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